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Defining "Normal" in Their Own Image: Psychological Professionals, Middle-Class Normativity, and the Postwar Popularization of Psychology

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Psychological Professionals, Middle-Class Normativity, and the Postwar Popularization of Psychology

by

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Dedication

For my father, who introduced me to psychology.

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Defining "Normal" in Their Own Image:

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This dissertation examines the relationship between the growth and popularization of psychology in American life in the postwar period and Americans' belief that theirs is a "classless," or overwhelmingly middle-class, society. I argue that psychology has, until recently, inadvertently naturalized middle-class norms of self-perception, communication, aspirations, and subjectivity. From the 1950s on, the United States has been what observers call a "therapeutic culture." Psychological ideas have infused the major arenas of American life, including the educational, judicial, commercial, political, personal, and interpersonal realms. This project examines the origins and development of psychological professionals' views of class, highlighting the professional, economic, disciplinary, and cultural factors that combined to form those views.

I analyze a small but persistent thread of dialogue in the professional literature of the period that questioned mainstream psychological assumptions about class, and I explore how that impulse developed into major mental health policy initiatives in the 1960s, then was undermined by political and social conflicts. I also develop a case history of one mental health project that attempted to transcend psychology's class biases, only to be contained by structural and disciplinary factors. After examining psychological professionals' views of various publics, this project investigates a series of publics' views of psychological practitioners. I draw on popular portrayals of postwar psychological practitioners across various media, including one particular working-class medium, postwar men's adventure magazines, and employ classic cultural studies readings to analyze the significant differences in the portrayals.

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Introduction

Americans are confused about class. The Associated Press gave us a perfect example of this confusion in February 2008 when it quoted then-presidential candidate Hillary Clinton describing herself as the "candidate of, from and for the middle class of America." In the very next sentence, with no apparent sense of inconsistency, the AP explained that "Clinton has relied on working-class Democrats for much of her support … ."[1] For the newswire staff—arguably a group of people who care more than most about the precise use of language—the two terms were apparently interchangeable. I believe our confusion is the result of what Robert Seguin calls "middle-classlessness."[2] Seguin uses this phrase as a shorthand for the widespread, deeply held, but inaccurate American belief that most of us belong to a vaguely defined middle class.

While the perception is widespread, it is patently untrue. Despite the fact that the United States currently has the least equitable distribution of wealth in the developed world, and despite widespread evidence that the gap between rich and poor has been expanding rapidly since the 1970s, popular and scholarly commentators alike note that Americans simply don't have the vocabulary of class that would help them understand their economic situation.[3] Inequalities of economics, opportunity, and autonomy are

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[1] *International Herald Tribune,* "Clinton Presents Case for Middle Class as She Tries to Hold onto Her Coalition," February 15, 2008.

[2] Robert Seguin, *Around Quitting Time: Work and Middle-Class Fantasy in American Fiction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

[3] For inequitable distribution of wealth, see, for example, Timothy M. Smeeding, "Public Policy, Economic Inequality, and Poverty: The United States in Comparative Perspective," *Social Science Quarterly* 86, no. 5 (December 2005): 955-983. Smeeding bases his claims on data from the much-cited but proprietary Luxembourg Income Study, a 20-year comparative analysis of national incomes. What qualifies as the "developed" world is, of course, contestable, and Smeeding disallows both Mexico and Russia to rank the

much more likely to be attributed to race or gender than to class; in the words of one sociologist, "class denial is woven into the fabric of American life." The question, then, is why.[4]

Scholars have identified a number of reasons for the lack of class awareness in the United States. They include the country's lack of a formal aristocracy; the fact that the New England colonists were a fairly homogenous, middling group (the Virginia colonists were not, but they've never loomed as large in our national mythology as the Puritans); the egalitarian revolutionary rhetoric; the frontier's function as a "safety valve" for people who couldn't or wouldn't fit into the traditionally stratified Eastern culture; the American ideal of rugged individualism; the constant stream of new immigrants into the American workforce; the government's use of force against unions at the turn of the last century; the country's affluence, which often afforded working-class people middle-class spending power; and of course, our long history of conflating race and class, which keeps us from seeing power and privilege clearly.[5]

United States as the leader in inequality. For the lack of an American understanding of class, see Benjamin DeMott, *The Imperial Middle: Why Americans Can't Think Straight About Class* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); Reeve Vanneman and Lynn Weber Cannon, *The American Perception of Class* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987); Paul Lauter and Ann Fitzgerald, *Literature, Class and Culture: An Anthology* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999), among many others.

[4] Stanley Aronowitz, *How Class Works: Power and Social Movement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 15.

[5] All of these arguments have been developed fully elsewhere. See Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Knopf, 2003); Michael Denning, "'The Special American Conditions': Marxism and American Studies," *American Quarterly* 38, no. 3 (1986): 356-380; Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Herbert George Gutman, *Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America: Essays In American Working-Class and Social History* (New York: Knopf, 1975); Paul Lauter, *From Walden Pond to Jurassic Park: Activism, Culture, & American Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); and Vanneman and Cannon.

But there is another, equally important factor at work. From the 1950s on, the United States has become what observers call a "therapeutic culture."[6] Psychological ideas have become influential throughout the culture: they infuse child development, education, the criminal justice system, corporate management, advertising, and politics. Popular culture and personal interactions are riddled with references to the id, ego, superego, complexes, neuroses, repression. We all know what behavior "obsessive compulsive" or "manic depressive" refers to, as do our radio commentators, our journalists, and the characters in the television shows we watch. This dissemination of psychological ideas has undoubtedly has its benefits; it has arguably made many of us more perceptive, more sensitive, more self aware.

However, there is also evidence that this psychologization of culture has contributed to America's sense of middle-classlessness. It has done so in two primary ways: first, by privileging middle-class ways of feeling, thinking, and communicating as the ideal standard to which all people should aspire; and second, by defining the individual as the source of both psychological problems and solutions, thereby deemphasizing the role of systemic social inequalities or the possibility of collective solutions. Moreover, both of these phenomena have become pervasive and commonsensical in mainstream American culture, effectively masking awareness of the ways in which they support the status quo and favor the privileged classes. These two phenomena interact with each other to help sustain middle-classlessness.

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[6] Philip Rieff introduced the idea of a therapeutic culture in *The Triumph of the Therapeutic: Uses of Faith After Freud* (New York: HarperTorchbooks, 1966), and the concept has been widely adopted.

This middle-class perspective generally shared by the psychological profession has contributed to "middle-classlessness" in two primary ways. First, while psychology's focus on the individual as a source of both problems and solutions has come to seem commonsensical to many modern Americans, that focus precludes the acknowledgement of or search for systemic social inequalities. This is the sense in which a number of commentators have claimed that psychology obscures the reality of class inequality. Second, when psychological practitioners unreflexively carry their own middle-class assumptions about appropriate psychological functioning into their practices, it can reinforce negative class stereotypes for both parties. The unexamined distances between the professional's expectations and the working-class client's lived experience can leave those clients feeling misunderstood, inadequate, or angry, while simultaneously reaffirming the practitioners' biases. As psychological ideas have infused our therapeutic culture, these unexamined, class-based assumptions about what "normal" is have increasingly made non-middle-class ways of living seem inferior or dysfunctional.[7]

While many scholars have investigated Americans' lack of class awareness, and many others have explored the histories of psychology, only a few have articulated a relationship between the two topics, and those have only done so briefly. No full-length treatment of that relationship exists. Moreover, although a small number of mid-century psychologists and sociologists did recognize and write about middle-class bias among the

[7] For the negative effects of psychological professionals' middle-class assumptions, see Marcia Hill, "We Can't Afford It: Confusions and Silences on the Topic of Class"; Esther D. Rothblum, "The Rich Get Social Services and the Poor Get Capitalism"; and Nancy Lynn Baker, "Class as a Construct in a 'Classless' Society"; all in *Classism and Feminist Therapy: Counting Costs,* ed. Marcia Hill and Esther D. Rothblum (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1996).

discipline's practitioners and within its ideas, no scholarship that I am aware of addresses this atypical postwar body of work.

Psychology's Middle-Class Worldview

Psychological professionals in the United States have tended to be from middle-class families of origin; the few mid-century surveys that collected data on psychological practitioners' socioeconomic backgrounds indicated that most were from the middle- and upper-middle classes, while very few came from the working classes.[8] A large body of sociological and psychological work continues to claim that different class positions are correlated with different language patterns, values, preferences, patterns of sociability, and ways of perceiving and engaging with the world.[9] This is not deterministic: no infallible correlation exists between class and cultural traits. The material conditions of

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[8] A series of small surveys of psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatric residents, and graduate students in counseling psychology found a preponderance of middle-and upper-middle-class backgrounds among the practitioners; see Arnold A. Rogow, *The Psychiatrists* (New York: G. P Putnam's Sons, 1970), 57; Denise Bystryn Kandel, "Status Homophily, Social Context, and Participation in Psychotherapy," *The American Journal of Sociology* 71, no. 6 (May 1966): 640-650; p. 644; David W. Rowden, Ronald C. Dillehay, Jerry B. Michel, and Harry W. Martin, "Judgments About Candidates for Psychotherapy: The Influence of Social Class and Insight-Verbal Ability," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 11, no. 1 (March 1970): 51-58; 55; and Jarvis A. Wright and Ben O. Hutton, "Influence of Client Socioeconomic Status on Selected Behaviors, Attitudes, and Decisions of Counselors," *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 24, no. 6 (1977): 527-530; 528. While none of these were large-scale surveys, observers both at the time and today have frequently noted that psychological practitioners tend to be from upper-middle and middle-class backgrounds. See, for example, Jerome K. Myers and Leslie Schaffer, "Social Stratification and Psychiatric Practice," *American Sociological Review* 19 (June 1954): 307-310; 309.

[9] See Basil Bernstein, *Class, Codes, and Control: Theoretical Studies Towards a Sociology of Language* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971); Douglas E. Foley, *Learning Capitalist Culture: Deep in the Heart of Tejas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990); Klaus Eder, *The New Politics of Class: Social Movements and Cultural Dynamics in Advanced Societies* (London: Sage, 1993); Nicole M. Stephens, Hazel Rose Markus, and Sara S. M. Townsend, "Choice as an Act of Meaning: The Case of Social Class," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 93, no. 5 (2007): 814-830; Wanda M. L. Lee, *An Introduction to Multicultural Counseling* (Philadelphia, Taylor & Francis, 1999), 16; Barbara Jensen, "Across the Great Divide: Crossing Classes and Clashing Culture," in *What's Class Got to Do With It? American Society in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Michael Zweig (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 174; and Melvin L. Kohn, "Social Structure and Personality: A Quintessentially Sociological Approach to Social Psychology," *Social Forces* 68 (1989): 26–33.

life influence, but do not dictate, culture. That influence, however, is important: as sociologist Melvin Kohn put it, reiterating his long-held belief, "Members of different social classes, by virtue of enjoying (or suffering) different conditions of life, come to see the world differently—to develop different conceptions of social reality, different aspirations and hopes and fears, different conceptions of the desirable."[10] Further, individuals are generally unaware of the classed nature of their own preferences and perceptions, and sociologist Peter Kaufman has suggested that middle-class social reproduction in particular is so normative as to be invisible, even to class analysts, who have tended to focus studies of cultural reproduction on the working classes.[11] Psychological professionals, whose training fosters an individualistic rather than structural view of the world, are unlikely to be more aware of this socialization process than other members of the middle classes.

The small percentage of psychological professionals from working-class backgrounds, while not subject to middle-class socialization in their formative years, have generally been indoctrinated into more middle-class worldviews as part of their professional training. The education required of psychologists and psychiatrists is extensive, and working-class studies theorists maintain that the university itself fosters

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[10] Kohn, 31. While the view expressed by Kohn and others clearly clashes with the traditional psychoanalytic approach to individual development, the sociological evidence and first-person accounts, particularly from individuals who have experienced cross-class mobility, are compelling.

[11] Peter Kaufman, "Middle-Class Social Reproduction: The Activation and Negotiation of Structural Advantages," *Sociological Forum* 20, no. 2 (June 2005): 245-270; see especially 247-248. Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habius is also relevant; Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste,* trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984).

middle-class ways of thinking and being.[12] Additionally, the subject matter of psychology has, until quite recently, naturalized middle-class perspectives, communication styles, and modes of self-representation.[13] The result is that most psychologists have unreflexively assumed that a "normal" or "mentally healthy" state of being resembles that of themselves and their middle-class peers. The upshot of this assumption is that modes of self-presentation, handling emotion, communication, relationships, and aspirations—all aspects of life that we now know are deeply classed—have been seen by psychological professionals through a lens of middle-class expectations.[14]

A number of psychological and sociological theorists have addressed this middle-class perspective in psychology. In 1938, sociologist Kingsley Davis identified what future theorists would recognize as the central problem—that the practice of psychology (or "mental hygiene," in 1930s parlance) unconsciously privileges middle-class worldviews and values. However, Davis himself didn't see that orientation as terribly problematic. He explained, "Doubtless there is a tendency to spread the middle class Protestant ethic to classes which are not middle and hence not so mobile, but this could

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[12] See Carolyn Leste Law and C. L. Barney Dews, eds., *This Fine Place So Far from Home: Voices of Academics from the Working Class* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995) and Jensen for first-person accounts of the middle-class culture of academia.

[13] Two recent developments, the theories of cultural psychology and the practices of multicultural counseling, have begun to challenge that naturalization. An outgrowth of heightened sensitivity to racial, ethnic, and gender differences in the 1970s, cultural psychology and multicultural counseling expanded to regularly include class differences in the 1990s.

[14] Dana Cloud, *Control and Consolation in Culture and Politics: Rhetoric of Therapy* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998); Philip Cushman, *Constructing the Self, Constructing America: A Cultural History of Psychotherapy* (Boston: Addison-Wesley, 1995); Joel Pfister, "On Conceptualizing the Cultural History of Emotional and Psychological Life in America," in *Inventing the Psychological: Toward a Cultural History of Emotional Life in America*, ed. Joel Pfister and Nancy Schnog (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); and Steven C. Ward, *Modernizing the Mind: Psychological Knowledge and the Remaking of Society* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002).

scarcely be interpreted as class 'exploitation.' We believe, rather, that the mental hygienist is really enforcing, in a secular way and under the guise of science, the standards of the entire society."[15] In other words, for Davis, as for the vast majority of professionals, middle-class America was the America others should aspire to. It is also worth noting that while the hygienists' promotion of middle-class values and behaviors was not, as Davis noted, "exploitation," it does provide a good example of hegemony at work, and demonstrates one of the unthinking ways in which dominant classes maintain their cultural dominance.

Clinical psychologist William Haase noted a similarly middle-class perspective in psychology in 1953, though unlike Davis, Haase expressed discomfort with it. Haase was also one of the first to suggest that advanced education in psychology in particular, rather than just the broad acculturating effect of higher education, might foster middle-class perspectives in aspiring practitioners whose backgrounds were not middle class. Haase developed a research project to test for practitioners' class biases. He developed pairs of Rorschach test responses that had been carefully crafted to reflect similar psychological states, but which were identified as being from patients with different class positions—one middle-class patient, and one "lower-class" patient. He provided sets of these pairs to 75 psychologists, discovering that the practitioners evaluated the lower-class patient as sicker than the middle-class patient. Interestingly, this bias towards middle-class patients held even for practitioners whose backgrounds were working- or lower-class. Haase

[15] Kingsley Davis, "Mental Hygiene and the Class Structure," *Psychiatry* 1 (1938): 55-65; quote on 56.

hypothesized that this bias was the result of academic socialization. In Haase's words, "the formal, academic preparation and the correlative social processes … inculcate the class identification upon the noviate professional."[16] And not only does the new professional absorb "class identification," but "where class is concerned, the psychologist's attitudes and values are modified in the direction of norms relatively common for his discipline." In short, the psychological professional adopts a middle-class worldview as part of his professional training.

Defining Class

The possibility of a "middle-class worldview" must be articulated against the complex and contested idea of class itself. "Class" refers both to objective socioeconomic position and subjective sense of identity; it is a social and cultural category as well as an economic and political one; and its boundaries, definitions, categories, and relevance are hotly contested by scholars in an array of disciplines, as well as by politicians, members of the media, and the general public. To approach the term's economic and political meanings, modern theorists grapple with Karl Marx, Max Weber, and a host of neo-Marxists and neo-Weberians.[17] In the Marxist view, class involves the inevitable conflict

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[16] For the original study, see William Haase, *Rorschach Diagnosis, Socio-Economic Class, and Examiner Bias*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1956; cited in Frank Riessman and Sylvia Scribner, "The Under-Utilization of Mental Health Services by Workers and Low Income Groups: Causes and Cures," paper presented at the AFL-CIO Meeting on Mental Health, May 20-22 1964, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, M. P. Catherwood Library, Cornell University (hereafter NILER), Box 5 Folder 12. For later discussion of the educational socialization, see William Haase, "The Role of Socioeconomic Class in Examiner Bias," *Mental Health of the Poor,* ed. Frank Riessman, Jerome Cohen, and Arthur Pearl (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964); 244.

[17] In addition, Emile Durkheim's model of society still enjoys some influence, though less than that of Marx and Weber. Durkheim believed that society functioned much like a biological organism, with the resulting interdependence of various positions fostering cooperation for the common good.

between owners of capital and workers whose only economic option is to sell their labor power. Moreover, this conflict is necessarily exploitive: the owners appropriate surplus labor value from the workers, ensuring the reproduction of class relations.

Alternately, the Weberian perspective, which has enjoyed more influence in the United States, highlights status and stratification rather than inherent class conflict and exploitation. Weber includes social status and political affiliation along with economic resources to determine what he calls an individual's overall "life chances." Individuals belong to one of four classes, which attempt to maintain their advantages by excluding others. Social mobility is possible within each of the classes, as each class is comprised of clusters of economic groups, but mobility is difficult between classes. While Weber's emphasis on status, stratification, and mobility has resonated with mainstream American economic thought, status differentials simply do not provide the same explanatory power as does Marx's description of exploitive relations. People with privilege maintain their privileged style of life precisely because they can exploit the underpaid labor of those who have no choice but to perform underpaid labor.

But class is not simply an economic phenomenon; it also has social, cultural, and psychological dimensions. Class is social in that, as E. P. Thompson so memorably pointed out, it is a relationship, not a thing. Further, the parameters and textures of that relationship are constantly shifting. The cultural contours of class have been explored by a series of theorists: Antonio Gramsci's idea of cultural hegemony posits that cultural norms tend to reflect the interests of the dominant classes while simultaneously making those norms seem natural, just, and beneficial to the broader society. Pierre Bourdieau's

concept of habitus theorizes the deeply classed way in which individuals are socialized into their personal preferences, tastes, communication styles, and bodily comportments.[18] A host of scholars in the fields of cultural studies and working-class studies have grappled with the fluid and contested nature of class as lived experience. Finally, the "psychological," or interior and subjective dimensions of class are central to issues of class consciousness, affiliation, and self-image, as well as being deeply embedded in the social and cultural experiences of class.

These multiple layers of meaning, as well as the varied and conflicting perspectives of class in the social sciences, render class a difficult subject to address. The power relationships that constitute class are perpetually in motion, complicating the project of definition still further. In addition, class positions are inextricably intertwined with other aspects of identity that similarly situate an individual within systems of privilege and disadvantage. People live classed lives inflected in various ways by their race, gender, sexual orientation, age, and ablebodiedness, among other characteristics. So it is inevitable that, when I investigate the relationship between psychology and class, I am artificially isolating one aspect of multifaceted identities that roughly correspond with positions of privilege. Still, such artificial isolation is the most feasible approach to undertaking an examination of the ways in which psychology has interacted with concepts of class.

My use of the term "class," then, acknowledges objective socioeconomic location,

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[18] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963); Antonio Gramsci, *Letters from Prison*, trans. Lynne Lawner (London: Jonathan Cape, 1975); Bourdieu.

but necessarily in relation to other locations and in the context of power differentials. It is relational, it is in flux, but it does represent structures of privilege and disadvantage that impact real lives. Further, my use of class categories assumes widely shared, though not universal, subjective cultural experiences of class positions, or what I refer to as worldviews. It is important to note that an individual does not need to have class consciousness—an awareness of his or her objective class position—in order to be socialized into a particular class worldview. One may, for example, habitually speak with concrete language, rely on a "here-and-now" orientation rather a future one, and prefer a sense of fraternal community over competitive individualism—all, according to theorists, cultural characteristics of the working classes.[19] However, that individual may never consider him- or herself classed at all, or may self-identify with the middle class. Finally, while my understanding of class includes its performative aspects and constant renegotiations of power, and while I acknowledge that identities are not fixed, I am convinced that for many individuals, the possibilities of identity are limited by material conditions.

While sociologists, economists, politicians, and the public vigorously disagree about the precise constitution of "middle class" or "working class" positions, I use "middle class" to refer to mental, rather than manual workers. Middle-class individuals typically have attended some college. "Upper-middle class" refers to more affluent and/or

[19] See Bernstein, Foley, and Stephens, Marcus, and Townsend.

highly educated professionals.[20] The "working classes" refers to manual, industrial, semi-skilled, and unskilled laborers. The terms are regrettably imprecise; however, that imprecision can be a helpful reminder that class is fluid, not fixed, and a relationship, not a thing.

Defining Psychology

This dissertation explores multiple facets of the diverse field that is broadly described as "psychology." I address the mental hygiene movement, psychiatry, psychotherapy, industrial-organizational psychology, counseling psychology, social psychology, and Community Mental Health Centers, among other aspects of the field. However, much of this dissertation addresses popular perceptions of mid-century psychology, and those popular perceptions rarely included precise disciplinary identification. As psychological ideas have been disseminated into, adopted and adapted by mainstream culture, they have rarely maintained their original, academic forms. Similarly, the average individual adopting psychological ideas is generally oblivious to the battles over disciplinary boundaries that have so engaged theorists.[21] One result of this popular oblivion is that scholars who focus on the popularization of psychology typically discuss that popularization as an aggregate of the "psychological," rather than attempting to parse out specific influences of theoretical psychology, clinical psychology, neurological psychology, social psychology, psychiatry, etc. Where it is relevant, I am

[20] Bourdieu, among other class theorists, posits that classes can be divided into two main "fractions." One fraction primarily values economic capital, and the other primarily values cultural capital.
[21] For example, a series of surveys published in *American Psychologist* from the 1950s through the 1970s consistently bemoaned the public's inability to distinguish between psychology and psychiatry.

careful to describe the specific aspect of psychology under discussion. Otherwise, like previous scholars of popular psychology, I refer to the concept of psychology as understood by the public as "psychology" or, following Ward, "psy."[22]

Previous Perspectives

While a handful of previous scholars have addressed the relationship between psychology and class, only one such work is a full-length treatment. Rhetorician and communications scholar Dana Cloud explores how the pervasive American idea of the therapeutic has naturalized individualistic, rather than collective, approaches to problems in modern society, privileging responses of "healing, coping, [and] adaptation" rather than challenges to inequalities in the social structure.[23] While her case-history accounts of the therapeutic paradigm's structural effects are generally persuasive, the scope of my investigation is both narrower and more specific. Where Cloud takes a macro view of the therapeutic's effects on society at large, I focus on the emergence of class-based perspectives in psychological literature and practice, as well as class-inflected differences in the popular perceptions of psychology and psychologists.

Clinical psychologist Philip Cushman provides a compelling account of

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Summarized in Wendy Wood, Melinda Jones, and Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr., "Surveying Psychology's Public Image," *American Psychologist* 41 (1986) 947-953.

[22] Ward, 6. Other theorists who have grappled with the parameters of popular psychology in a similar manner include Schnog, who uses "psychology" as her all-encompassing term; Jansz and van Drunen, who define "practical psychology" as including professional, applied psychology, but also "the numerous other ways in which psychology is brought to bear on society, including popularization and the use of psychology by other disciplines, such as psychiatry, education, criminology, and cultural anthropology" (Jansz and van Drunen, x), and Ellen Herman, who explains that her "use of the term 'psychology' does not stop at the margins of an academic discipline or the boundaries of a professional job category. Rather, it indicates an emphasis on analyzing mental processes, interpersonal relationships, introspection, and behavior as a way of explaining both individual and social realities"; Herman, *The Romance of American Psychology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 5.

psychotherapy's role in the construction of the "empty self," his phrase for what he sees as the void of the modern psyche, which attempts to fill itself via consumption and psychotherapy.[24] Like Cloud, Cushman acknowledges the impact of American psychology's emphasis on individualized, interior experience at the expense of the social and structural. However, where Cloud attributes psychology's politically neutralizing, interior emphasis to capitalism itself, Cushman takes a more nuanced approach, examining disciplinary schisms within psychotherapy, as well as how practitioners' desire for scientific credibility led them away from a view of the self as socially constructed and towards the idea of an internalized that develops independently of social and economic influences. Cushman's claim that modern psychoanalysis obscures social processes supports my own view, but his analysis is not class specific. He briefly alludes to my chief concern early in *Constructing the Self*, noting "There is something about the field of psychology and the practices of psychotherapy that is particularly emblematic of the texture of twentieth-century American middle-class life."[25] However, Cushman's work does not pursue that point.

Finally, the theorist who has influenced my work the most is American studies scholar Joel Pfister. His introduction to *Inventing the Psychological: Toward a Cultural History of Emotional Life in America* helped me to conceptualize the questions I wanted to ask in my own project.[26] Pfister's formulation of the interplay between culture, social

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[23] Cloud, xiv.
[24] Cushman, 6.
[25] Ibid., 4.
[26] Pfister.

structure, and the development of psychological subjectivities provided me with a more precise way to map the interactions of psychology and class than other approaches had. While Pfister addresses therapeutic culture's individualization of structural social problems, his analysis encompasses much more. For example, reflecting on the process of theorizing *Inventing* with his co-editor, he describes their realization that "insight" itself is a highly constructed, culturally specific, and classed cultural artifact.[27]

Pfister grounds his ideas in specific, though diverse, examples such as cross-cultural comparisons, labor practices, and popular culture. His examples of the classed nature of psychological interiority, and the conflicts arising from that, were particularly helpful. Describing the antipathy between the working-class Stanley Kowalski and his bourgeois sister-in-law, Blanche DuBois, in Tennessee Williams' *Streetcar Named Desire*, Pfister writes that Stanley "has no doubt that the display of a 'therapeutic' self is a marker of class status—a display he does not welcome on what he considers his domestic stage."[28] Pfister also introduces the question of how these psychological interiors are perceived by people who, by virtue of class position, are excluded from performing them. Pfister's conceptual framework and series of questions provided me with a launching point for my own investigations.

In contrast to the few works that address the intersection of psychology and class, the literature on class is enormous. My project has been particularly influenced by scholarship from the fields of cultural sociology, cultural studies, and working-class

[27] Ibid., 18.
[28] Ibid., 23.

studies. From sociology, Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and cultural capital, as well as Michele Lamont's cross-cultural investigations into the symbolic boundaries of status, have been most useful. Michel Foucault has provided relevant theorizing as well, particularly with his "regime of the norm," or the ways in which rules of behavior, standards of perception, and consequences for transgression become diffused throughout the practices of a society. While this concept has been most frequently applied to sexuality, it is also relevant to middle-class standards of decorum and civility. However, I am uncomfortable with Foucault's postmodernist claim that identity is, in the end, performative; that view is incompatible with the very limited identity options available to individuals in particularly subordinated structural positions.

Cultural studies theorists such as Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall, and Paul Willis pioneered a theoretical approach that grounded the study of cultural forms in the context of the economic and social structures from which they developed. Drawing on Marxist constructs of class relations and Gramsci's model of hegemony, the Birmingham school interrogated the ways in which dominant cultural patterns were both imposed and resisted via popular cultural products. While the model is invaluable, late twentieth-century critics have taken some cultural studies theorists to task for overstating the possibilities and incidence of resistance.

Finally, I have drawn on the field of working-class studies, exemplified by scholars such as Michael Zweig, Sherry Linkton, Terry Easton, and Barbara Jensen. Working-class studies theorists provide, among other things, first-person accounts of lived experience

and working-class subjectivity. These voices have been crucial in illustrating the ways in which class positioning can impact individuals' lives, perceptions, interactions, and structures of feeling, to borrow Raymond Williams' term. In particular, the many working-class voices describing the differences that they have perceived between working-class and middle-class cultures, values, relationships, and priorities have been enlightening, especially those voices of individuals who have experienced cross-class mobility. However, a great deal of working-class studies material relies solely on those voices and stories, to the exclusion of theory, historicization, and context.

Psychology and Class Normativity

One way in which theorists have claimed that psychological ideas obscure the realities of class is through psychology's insistence on the individual as the unit of analysis. Psychology's focus on the individual seems, to people socialized into modern therapeutic worldviews and individualism, both obvious and inevitable. However, the "naturalness" of the idea that one's deep interior is the source of personal problems is culturally constructed, and is rooted in the broader American development of individualization. Broadly, individualization involved a move away from identification with groups and communities and towards an emphasis on the individual him- or herself.[29] In 1835, when a translation of Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* introduced the word "individualism" to describe Americans' preference for self-sufficiency over public life, its meaning reflected a sixteenth-century perception of the

individual as defined by his exterior, public role (albeit, in the American's case, his rejection of it). However, by the late nineteenth century, the idea of oneself as an individual had come to be associated with a private, interior, psychological self. One recent social history of psychology described the impact of that turn-of-the-century development: "Feelings were increasingly seen as the foremost source of individuality. … Some held that [rationality] was nothing but an artificial mask that tried to cover what really mattered 'inside': emotions as the source of an authentic self."[30] This interior, "authentic" self was, of course, the subject of investigation in what was then the new science of psychology.[31]

Individualization has also been, as noted above, a highly political phenomenon. The American (and psychological) valorization of the individual has been blamed—or credited, depending on one's orientation—for the lack of a viable socialist party in the United States, for the nation's unwillingness to support social services to the extent that most European countries do, and for a fragmentation of community that has, paradoxically, resulted in poorer mental health for many individuals. Individualization is also heavily classed; its development intensified as the middle classes were forming, and it served as one way in which they could differentiate themselves from the masses. In his

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[29] While historians trace the origins of individualization to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, its early form involved one's effect on the community, not one's personal, interior experiences. In the nineteenth century, individualization evolved into the more modern form that we recognize today.

[30] Jeroen Jansz, "Psychology and Society: An Overview," in *A Social History of Psychology,* ed. Jeroen Jansz and Peter van Drunen (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004): 12-44; quote on 22.

[31] Psychological professionals have worked tirelessly to frame their discipline as a "science," mostly to establish credibility. In the United States, however, psychology was originally taught in the philosophy departments of universities. See John C. Burnham, *How Superstition Won and Science Lost: Popularizing Science and Health in the United States* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987), 87-89.

overview of late nineteenth-century individualization, Jeroen Jansz claims that "[t]he first feature of the individual was a middle-class background."[32] This emphasis on individualism clearly fostered the popular acceptance of psychology, with its microscopic focus on the individual. It must be remembered, however, that the relationship between the two is clearly dialectical, and many argue that the pervasiveness of the psychological perspective has both intensified the process of individualization and naturalized it.[33]

Another way in which psychological ideas have, until recently, worked to mask class issues is through psychology's insistence that the "self" is not culturally constructed. The recent development of social constructionism, particularly as it has developed in psychology, has begun to challenge that understanding of self.[34] Social constructionism in psychology was an outgrowth of the broader sociology of knowledge work of the mid-1960s. Citing Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman's 1966 *The Social Construction of Reality*[35] as a major influence and drawing together work on the social construction of emotion, identity, roles, and interaction, Kenneth Gergen pioneered a broader social construction of psychology with his seminal 1985 article, "The Social

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[32] Jansz in Jansz and van Drunen, 24.

[33] See especially Graham Richards, *Putting Psychology in Its Place: An Introduction from a Critical Historical Perspective* (New York: Routledge, 1996), and Jansz and van Drunen.

[34] Proponents of social construction in psychology include Kenneth J. Gergen, *An Invitation to Social Construction* (London: Sage, 1999), and *Realities and Relationships: Soundings in Social Construction* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994); John Shotter, *Cultural Politics of Everyday Life: Social Constructionism, Rhetoric, and Knowing of the Third Kind* (Buckingham, England: Open University Press, 1993); Richards; Cushman; Pfister and Schnog; and Ward.

[35] Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966).

Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology."[36] Gergen's view, and that of the theorists who have followed him, recognizes that social, cultural, and specific historical influences combine to create any particular society's idea of what a "self" is. Further, this view cautions that there is no "true," "natural" self hiding beneath these constructions, waiting to be discovered. The implication for psychology, then, is that as it developed as a discipline, its process of describing and naming interior states did not simply map discovered "truths" of interiority, but rather helped to shape the very experience of that interiority as it created what came to be experienced as those truths. This process is what Schnog describes as "the power of culture not simply to discover emotional truths but to create them."[37]

And, as this culture was creating and mapping emotional "truths" in the burgeoning study of psychology, it was doing so in the context of a society that was stratified by class; whose members' experience of life, self, and relationships were dramatically shaped by their class positions; but whose national mythology discouraged articulation of that stratification. So, in mapping and creating this new psychological frontier, the professional men who led the field in the United States created those maps in their own images.

But there is another, more subtle way in which psychology has impacted the experience of class in the United States. Several theorists, including Kovel, Pfister, and Ward, argue that the construction and demonstration of psychological interiority itself has

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[36] Kenneth J. Gergen, , "The Social Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology," *American Psychologist* 40 (March 1985): 266-275.

become a class marker.[38] The "educated classes" have, since at least the turn of the last century, been socialized to value and display introspection, emotional "insight," and a psychologically based vocabulary of interiority. In Pfister's terms, "[P]articular modes of defining emotions and rituals of reading the self have contributed to the constitution and presentation of middle- and upper-class identity." Conversely, the absence of those presentations and vocabularies tends to be interpreted as a lack of intelligence, education, or "depth" by members of the middle and upper classes, naturalizing and justifying their own place in the socioeconomic hierarchy. Or, to borrow from Pfister again, the white middle class's "invention of a therapeutic culture has also been tied to its strategy to establish its 'inner' ('human') value over the working class and over subordinate ethnic and racial groups.'"[39]

While Pfister's argument has merit on the macro level, it is also important to note that some individual practitioners of psychology were aware that their discipline not only ignored problems of social inequality, but exacerbated those problems. Their awareness is particularly impressive given the cultural and professional pressures that worked to naturalize the status quo. They held minority views in their own specialties, and many of the professionals who published class-based work soon moved on to other interests. A few maintained their interest, however, such as industrial-organization psychologists Arthur Kornhauser and Ross Stagner, social psychologist Frank Riessman, and

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[37] Nancy Schnog, "On Inventing the Psychological," in Pfister and Schnog, 4.
[38] Joel Kovel, *The Radical Spirit: Essays on Psychoanalysis and Society* (London: Free Association Books, 1988), 152-153; Pfister, Pfister and Schnog, 23; Ward, 22-23.
[39] Pfister, Pfister and Schnog, 23.

psychiatrists Hugh Storrow and Frederick C. Redlich. These psychological professionals acknowledged that the profession did not address differences of class appropriately, interrogated the reasons for that deficiency, assessed its impact, and attempted—sometimes feebly, sometimes sweepingly—to rectify it.

This project, then, traces psychological professionals' perceptions of class during the discipline's dramatic growth in both numbers and influence in the postwar period. I examine a small but persistent thread of discourse that questioned mainstream psychological assumptions about class, and I explore the development, increasing influence, and eventual derailment of that discourse. I demonstrate how external political and cultural forces worked to contain the expansion of a more egalitarian mental health movement, and how the optimism of psychological professionals who promoted that expansion, especially via the Community Mental Health Center Act, eventually cost them credibility with the public.

But the class views of psychological practitioners are only part of this story. In addition to detailing how mid-century psy professionals perceived individuals through the lens of class, this project also aims to examine the ways in which variously classed publics perceived the newly influential psy professionals. Given that psychology has unthinkingly promoted middle-class worldviews, values, communication styles and emotional patterns as "normal," we have to wonder how members of the working classes perceived a psychology that framed them as non-normative. How did they view a psychology that encouraged them to interiorize middle-class "structures of feeling" and, as it has been applied in schools, industrial settings, and the criminal justice system,

punished them for not doing so? While first-person, working-class views of mid-century psychology have been frustratingly elusive, divergent portrayals of psychological professionals are available in class-specific media. This project analyzes presentations of psychology in both mass media and one specifically working-class medium to identify a range of the perceptions and uses of psychology. I argue that, rather than having a single meaning, these representations of psychology served a variety of functions: they worked at times to mock the dominant culture, as well as to express working-class anxieties over diminishing autonomy, changes in gender roles, and sexuality.

An "American" Study

Though neither psychological thought nor denial of class stratification is an exclusively American phenomenon, both have developed in a unique way in the United States. While psychological thought has pervaded much of the Western world, no other culture has embraced it as enthusiastically as the U. S. has. Since World War II, this nation has led the world in the production and utilization of psychological professionals, and observers acknowledge it as the world's "most advanced psychiatric society."[40] As early as the mid-1950s, psychological professionals celebrating unprecedented public interest in their field identified that interest as "peculiar to the United States,"[41] and watched as that interest manifested itself in a deluge of popular culture portrayals of

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[40] Moscowitz, 8, 279; John Demos, "Oedipus in America," in Pfister and Schnog, 64-65, 74. For numbers of psy professionals, see Herman, 3; the U.S. leads in both numerical and per-capita bases. Robert Castel, Françoise Castel, and Anne Lovell, *The Psychiatric Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), quote on ix.

[41] Nevitt Sanford, "Psychotherapy and the American Public," in *Psychology, Psychiatry and the Public Interest,* ed. Maurice H. Krout (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956), 118, cited in Herman, 257.

psychology and psychological professionals. In the 1950s, major newspapers, national circulation magazines, self-help books, radio and television programs, and fictional representations of psychological themes and professionals on television and in films heralded what one *Life* series called "The Age of Psychology."[42]

At the same time, Americans have embraced a unique national myth of classlessness that has, in turn, shaped class perceptions and behaviors in specifically American ways. In addition, during the postwar period, the very disciplinary fields that would most be expected to study issues of class—sociology, economics, history, American studies—generally succumbed to Cold War pressures, both hegemonic and overtly political, to adhere to the consensus view of American culture, and abandoned "class," a word with jarringly Soviet connotations. Instead, analysts overwhelmingly used the concept of "social status" to discuss the visible hierarchical positions of American cultural life. The United States government actively promoted the development of a status-ranking model, and most academic researchers in this country adopted it.[43]

Interestingly, though, the field of American studies has yet to fully investigate the implications of class relationships, despite the flight from consensus history in the 1970s, and despite the field's current attention to the interconnectedness of race, gender, and class. While a handful of American studies scholars have made impressive contributions

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[42] Ernest Havemann, "The Age of Psychology," *Life* series (January 7-February 4, 1957), later published (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957); cited in Burnham, 103, and Ward, 152. General discussions of mass-mediated popularization in Ruud Abma, "Madness and Mental Health" in Jansz and van Drunen, 113; Burnham, chapter 3; Herman, 257, 261-1; Moscowitz, 162-177, 260-269; and Ward, 150-158.
[43] Vanneman and Cannon, 42.

to understandings of class, others argue convincingly that the field "has failed to embrace more thoroughly class and its attendant struggles," the conclusion Larry J. Griffin and Maria Tempenis reached after conducting a content analysis of 50 years of *American Quarterly* issues. American studies scholar Paul Lauter calls class the "unaddressed item in the familiar trio 'race, gender, and class,'" and other American studies scholars have concurred.[44]

Similarly, the psychological professions have also neglected to fully address the implications of class. Echoing Lauter's critique of American studies, psychologists Joan Ostrove and Elizabeth Cole acknowledge that, although psychology as a discipline claims to attend to race, class, and gender, "class is the least explored of these three."[45] Even the advent of two new disciplinary offshoots, critical psychology and multicultural counseling, were slower to address class than race, gender, and sexual orientation.[46] Further, as psychological discourse has become a major part of American cultural life, the discipline's blindness to class has continued to reinforce middle-class norms. In addition to the subtle ways in which psychology's emphasis on individualism has helped to divert attention from class structures, individual psychologists and psychiatrists have

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[44] Larry J. Griffin and Maria Tempenis, "Class, Multiculturalism and the *American Quarterly," American Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (2002): 67-99. Paul Lauter, *From Walden Pond to Jurassic Park,* 57; Lauter also charges the discipline with "obscuring certain class realities at the center of American experience," 49. Similarly, Justin Lewis and Sut Jhally criticize American cultural studies for focusing on how individuals make pluralities of meaning without contextualizing those individuals within existing power structures. Lewis and Jhally, "The Politics of Cultural Studies: Racism, Hegemony, and Resistance," *American Quarterly* 46, no. 1 (March 1994): 114-117.

[45] Joan M. Ostrove and Elizabeth R. Cole, " Privileging Class: Toward a Critical Psychology of Social Class in the Context of Education," *Journal of Social Issues* 59, no. 4 (2003): 677-692; quote on 679.

[46] William Ming Liu, Geoffrey Soleck, Joshua Hopps, Kewsi Dunston, and Theodore Pickett, Jr., "A New Framework to Understand Social Class in Counseling: The Social Class Worldview Model and Modern Classism Theory," *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development* 32, no. 2 (April 2004): 95-122.

played a role in normalizing middle-class beliefs, attitudes, and values. Since most "psy" [47] professionals are from middle-class backgrounds, they often uncritically carry their own cultural assumptions into their practices.

Though I trace the development of psychological and class thought for a broader period, I focus my investigation on the 1950s and 1960s. The post-World War II period saw an explosion in the popularization of psychology, ensuring that a broad swath of the population would acquire at least some familiarity with psychological concepts. However, the particular kind of psychological interiority that was popularized in the 1950s lost some prominence with the ascendance of the biomedical model of psychological functioning and therapies in the late 1970s. The same time frame is a significant one for the working classes. Working-class individuals experienced a major economic shift in the postwar period when many, but not all, of them experienced a new affluence and middle-class consumption capabilities. Another major shift occurred for this group in the 1970s, when working-class economic growth flattened, major employers began massive layoffs, and observers note the onset of a still-widening gap between well-off and not-so-well-off Americans. These temporal parameters in both psychology and working-class studies provide this project with a logical timeframe.

Overview of Chapters

To begin my investigation, I describe the apex of psychological studies of class in the 1950s, then retrace the development of class perceptions in the United States from their origins in sociology. For a variety of professional, theoretical, political, and

[47] Ward's term for psychological and psychiatric; 6.

economic reasons, American sociology has been a fairly conservative discipline. Its leading practitioners developed a consensus-based model of social functioning which envisioned different groups in a culture as working together for the benefit of the whole society. This view pathologized dissent and conflict, and had the unintentional effect of justifying the status quo, including existing class formations. Chapter one outlines the development and pervasiveness of the sociological views of class, and examines their influence on psychological thought. It also details the factors that shaped psychological approaches to class: the development of intelligence testing, which evaluated people on a hierarchical scale and privileged those in the higher classes; the pervasiveness of eugenics, which provided "scientific" justification for elitism; and the expanding legitimacy of psychology through its application in both world wars. Finally, chapter one investigates the class-based critiques of the profession mounted by a few of its practitioners.

Chapter two begins in the wake of World War II, as psychology rapidly expanded into the popular American consciousness, and psychological professionals increasingly insisted that workers' mental health was different than that of the middle class. While most believed that those differences reflected deficiencies in the working-class psyche, some professionals attributed the problem to the class biases of psychologists themselves. Although one psychological specialty, industrial-organizational psychology, was well positioned to develop an especially nuanced view of working-class issues, the field instead aligned itself with management. This chapter outlines the evolution of industrial-organizational psychology and its impact on psychological investigations of class. The

focal point of this chapter is a case study: in 1958, a labor-supported research program hoped to develop approaches to mental health that would improve workers' lives. The program failed, but provides modern observers with a glimpse into the pervasiveness of middle-class psychological normativity.

In chapter three, my focus shifts from practitioners' views of various publics to various publics' views of psychological practitioners. As psychology became increasingly ubiquitous in postwar popular culture, representations of psychology in diverse media ran the gamut from earnest endorsements to outright mockery. Drawing on mass communications theory—particularly theories of reception—and sociological explorations of class-based media use, this chapter explores the multiple ways in which representations of psychology and psychological professionals could be "read," offering present-day observers a glimpse into the ambivalent responses to this new cultural authority. This chapter also examines the disappearance of working-class characters and images from the new, and newly upscale, mass media, and their replacement by a middle-class, consumer-oriented homogeneity.

Continuing my exploration of mass-mediated presentations of psychology, chapter four examines the ways in which a particular working-class medium navigated ideas of psychology in the postwar period. Men's adventure magazines, known in the trade as "armpit slicks," "men's sweat magazines," or "the sweats," were widely popular from the 1950s to the 1970s. Like mainstream periodicals, they addressed the "new" phenomenon of psychology. But while *Newsweek* advocated "fine tuning" one's emotions, the sweats took a different approach. In addition to the predictable use of

psychology as a veneer of respectability for sexual themes, the genre's use of psychology also demonstrated three major, recurring themes: fear of being controlled by external forces; concern over gender roles; and insecurities about sexual performance and sex norms. Relying on close readings and rhetorical analyses of the substantial collection of men's adventure magazines at Michigan State University, this chapter teases out not only how working-class readers made sense of the world through the sweats, but also how they made sense of—and use of—the increasingly ubiquitous norms of psychology.

My final chapter focuses on the social activism of the 1960s. In that decade, progressive social reformers achieved substantial gains. Congress funded a Community Mental Health Act in 1963 that proponents believed, in that optimistic era, would not only democratize mental health care, but would also elevate the functionality and personal development of the whole population. A year later, President Lyndon Baines Johnson launched an "unconditional war on poverty," promising to eradicate economic oppression just as thoroughly as we had eradicated polio. The enormous social advances of the Civil Rights movement, combined with a new national affluence, world prominence, and a deeply-felt belief in technology and progress, all encouraged proponents to believe that they could truly change the world. However, racist backlash, the escalation of an unpopular war, unrealistic expectations, and, not least, a naïve understanding of the structures and functions of late capitalism all managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. Though both the Community Mental Health Movement and the War on Poverty had seemed poised to disentangle the mental health professions

from unreflexive middle-class standards, both paradoxically ended up reinforcing the association instead.

The various ideas and practices of psychology have had an enormous impact on twentieth- and twenty-first century American life. At the visible level, they have shaped the country's educational, judicial, commercial, political, personal, and interpersonal realms. At a less visible level, they have privileged the understanding of social problems as individual problems, and they have constructed the idea of a subjective psychological interiority whose fullest, most psychologically ideal expression appears to mirror the subjectivity of educated elites. The popularization of this collection of psychological ideas has occurred in a country that is deeply stratified by class, and whose economic inequality has increased for decades, but whose national mythology leads many citizens to believe, perhaps vaguely, that they live in a "middle-class" society, and that most of them belong to an idealized (and ill-defined) middle class.

The relationship between psychology and class remains largely unexplored. This dissertation examines various aspects of that relationship to map it more fully. It traces the ways in which most psychological professionals came to think about class, and examines the views of those outliers who were dissatisfied with that standard perspective. It also explores two instances in which progressive practitioners marshal resources in attempts to challenge their profession's class-based inequalities. In both instances—a labor-backed research project and the national Community Mental Health Act—the progressive impulses were ultimately unsuccessful. With the massive shift in the "psy" professions from psychology-driven paradigms to medication-driven paradigms, the

twentieth-century valorization of psychological interiority may lose some of its cachet, or at least some of its structural support, in the twenty-first century. But over the course of the second half of the twentieth century, the psychological paradigm worked to naturalize, reinforce, and perpetuate middle-class normativity, while simultaneously creating a symbolic arena in which those middle-class norms could be contested.

Chapter One. Approaches to Class in the American Social Sciences: Defining the Parameters

In 1958, sociologist August B. Hollingshead and psychiatrist Frederick C. Redlich published the results of a ten-year investigation into the relationship between social class and mental illness. Their book, *Social Class and Mental Illness: A Community Study*, garnered public attention, inspired scores of similar studies, and quickly became a foundational classic in the field. Additionally, like so many discussions of class in the United States, it also sparked heated disagreement. In a library copy of the 1958 publication, an anonymous reader used a page margin to take exception to part of the preface. Where the authors had written "Each class exhibits definite types of mental illness," the unknown critic penned, "thanks to practitioner bias."[1] The unknown commentator made an important, if oversimplified, point. By 1958, a number of publications had noted psychologists' and psychiatrists' preference for patients who shared their middle-class assumptions, priorities, and communications styles. Similarly, a series of studies had acknowledged differences in diagnosis, treatment, and length of treatment based on class. In fact, the authors of the marked library copy of *Social Class and Mental Illness* had made the same claims, albeit in softer terms.

But the unknown writer was only partly correct. In addition to practitioner bias, a number of other factors had combined to turn the postwar psychology of the nascent therapeutic society into a powerful force for middle-class normativity. Those factors

[1] Hollingshead and Redlich, *Social Class and Mental Illness: A Community Study* (New York: Wiley, 1958), vii.

include the traditional preeminence of sociology in matters of class, and the professional and disciplinary forces that shaped American sociologists' perceptions of class. Those traditions and perceptions included the ideal of sociology as a pure, empirical science; the corresponding emphasis on professional objectivity; and the resulting preference for quantitative, rather than qualitative, research. All of those factors tended to justify the existing class structure, and were for the most part adopted by psychologists when they turned their attention to class issues in the postwar period.

Psychology also introduced additional factors that facilitated middle-class normativity. The discipline's inherent focus on the individual psyche as the root—and remedy—of psychological problems precluded awareness of cultural, political, and economic factors that contributed to psychological dysfunction. Also, practitioners' perception of the psychological interior as a fixed, transhistorical, "natural" part of each human's experience camouflaged the ways in which psychological theorists mapped their own experiences, perceptions, and interiors onto their descriptions of the newly developing discipline. Moreover, those "created" psychological interiors were highly classed, as the vast majority of practitioners were from the middle classes.

This chapter traces the factors that combined to normalize an unreflexively classed psychology in the postwar period. I begin with the explosion of class-based psychological research and writing in the postwar period, an era that, at first glance, would seem to be an unlikely time for an upsurge of psychological interest in social class. Americans remember the 1950s as a time of conformity, the Cold War, and McCarthyism. It was also the decade during which the United States fully embraced mass

consumption, leading—at least in the short term—to a generally affluent consumerist society. The new array of mass-produced goods, coupled with the postwar prosperity that raised many working-class wages, allowed those working-class consumers a middle-class purchasing power. As a number of scholars have noted, this elision of working- and middle-class consumption is one of the many factors bolstering the popular belief in "middle-classlessness."[2] After outlining the deluge of postwar investigations into class, I return to the theoretical grounding for those investigations. This chapter examines the ways in which sociology, and later psychology, developed as professions, and traces both cultural and disciplinary influences on that development. One factor that shaped both disciplines' perspectives on class was the dominant cultural worldview at the time, which included belief in American exceptionalism and anti-Marxist sentiment. Another set of influences came from issues within each emerging discipline, such as the desire of both sociologists and psychologists to define their fields as natural sciences. Additionally, in sociology, recurring schisms between reformers and objectivists helped to shape the discipline's view of class, as did theoretical clashes between competing macro views of society. Combined, these factors tended to justify the status quo, foster description and quantification rather than analysis, and discourage any serious investigation of inequalities.

[2] For an exceptionally thorough overview, see Cohen, 152-165. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, a number of sociologists claimed that the new affluence of the working classes resulted in their "embourgeoisement," or identification with the middle classes and rejection of traditional working-class values and lifestyles. While the values shift in the embourgeoisement thesis was largely rejected in the late 1960s, the popular conflation of increased purchasing power and middle-class identity remained.

My overview of sociological approaches to class has an additional purpose. People's perceptions of what class is and how it functions are more often than not reflections of their own class positions and experiences. A number of theorists have acknowledged this; as one widely-used college sociology text explains, "What Marx discovered was that our own thought is a product of our social circumstances and that much of what we believe to be reality is but a reflection of our own socially determined interests."[3] Sociologist Michael Grimes makes the same point with his claim that class inequality "is unavoidably ideological, and as a consequence, each of us approaches it with certain 'taken-for-granteds' that derive from our own unique experiences as incumbents of class positions."[4] One purpose of this chapter is to identify the taken-for-granted perspectives on class position that these shapers of class theory have held.

A Postwar Mini-Boom: The Psychology of Class

Hollingshead and Redlich's groundbreaking work on social class and mental illness was the result of a ten-year community study in New Haven, Connecticut. Planning began in 1948, and in 1950, the five-year-old National Institute of Mental Health awarded Hollingshead and Redlich a substantial research grant. For the next eight years, a team of more than thirty conducted a large-scale investigation, modeled after sociological community studies. The researchers published study findings piecemeal in both sociological and psychological journals as the project progressed, publishing

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[3] Randall Collins and Michael Makowsky, *The Discovery of Society*, 3rd edition (New York: Random House, 1984), 6.
[4] Michael D. Grimes, *Class Analysis in Twentieth-Century American Sociology: An Analysis of Theories and Measurement Strategies* (New York: Praeger, 1991), xi.

twenty-five articles and producing two final books, Hollingshead and Redlich's *Social Class and Mental Illness* and, a year later, Jerome K. Myers and Bertram H. Roberts' *Family and Class Dynamics in Mental Illness*.[5]

Both books were marketed to a non-academic audience, and Hollingshead and Redlich's opening lines anticipated public reactions: "Americans prefer to avoid the two facts of life studied in this book: social class and mental illness. The very idea of 'social class' is inconsistent with the American ideal... ."[6] While the project was not the first community study of social class—sociologist Lloyd Warner had completed two large-scale and highly publicized studies on social class a decade earlier—it was the first in-depth look at the relationship between psychology and class. Further, while Warner's had ended up affirming the equity of class stratification and reinforcing the American belief in social mobility for the deserving, Hollingshead and Redlich were much more critical of the inequalities and disadvantages wrought by the class structure. While Hollingshead's middle-class background was unremarkable, he had demonstrated an unusual sensitivity to the inequalities of class in a previous work, *Elmtown's Youth*. Redlich, a native of Vienna who immigrated to the United States in 1938, brought a European perspective of class to the project. Further, he may have been personally more inclined to investigate below surface appearances than many of his colleagues were: raised as a Catholic, he discovered at the age of 24 that he had Jewish ancestors. The discovery occurred as the Austrian German Workers' Party aligned itself more closely with Adolph Hitler's Nazi

[5] Jerome K. Myers and Bertram H. Roberts, *Family and Class Dynamics in Mental Illness* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1959).

Party, an alignment that culminated in Austria's annexation to the German Third Reich in 1938.[7]

Despite the authors' concerns about public reaction to *Social Class and Mental Illness,* the book was widely read, went through multiple printings, and is still cited today. Both book-length reports produced by the study took pains to include descriptive anecdotes about class stratification that would resonate with readers. Rather than relying on the dry, statistical proof so common to the period's sociological work, they mentioned the "acid" tone of the upper-class matron who, put off by what she apparently perceived as the vulgarity of the researchers' questions, sniffed, "One does not speak of classes; they are felt."[8] Similarly, both books included engaging descriptions of actual cases, with details of class position that rang true. For example, to describe a patient from the lowest class on the scale, Myers and Roberts quoted his therapist's statement that the patient "bristled with aggression. He spit tobacco juice on the floor, swore at me, and strutted around like a bully."[9]

In addition to engaging their readers, both works documented significant class-based differences in the incidence, treatment, and prognosis of mental illness.

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[6] Hollingshead and Redlich, 3.

[7] Warner's work is addressed at length later in this chapter; Hollingshead's childhood class in Grimes, 74; August B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth: The Impact of Social Classes on Adolescents* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1949); Redlich's background in Hans Pols, "Voices from the Past: August Hollingshead and Frederick Redlich--Poverty, Socioeconomic Status, and Mental Illness," *American Journal of Public Health* 97, no. 10 (October 2007): 1755.

[8] Hollingshead and Redlich, 69.

[9] Both reports used Hollingshead's Index of Social Position to identify class. The index relies on neighborhood of residence, occupation, and education to assign a class position, which is ranked from class I (the most prestigious) to class V; for details, see Hollingshead and Redlich, 393-397. Anecdote from Myers and Roberts, 229.

Hollingshead and Redlich found that the highest socioeconomic group was underrepresented among mental patients; it comprised three percent of the population, but only one percent of the patients. At the other extreme, the lowest socioeconomic group was dramatically overrepresented among patients. This group made up only 18 percent of the community, but accounted for 38 percent of the mental patient population.[10] Further, once identified, the patients were treated differently based on their class positions. According to Hollingshead and Redlich, "There is a definite tendency to induce disturbed persons in classes I and II to see a psychiatrist in more gentle and 'insightful' ways than is the practice in class IV and especially class V, where direct, authoritative, compulsory, and, at times, coercively brutal methods are used." Finally, treatment varied by class. Higher-class patients saw their therapists more often, and for longer visits, than did patients in the lower strata. Even more disturbingly, patients in the lower classes were less likely to receive psychotherapy and were more likely to be subjected to electroshock treatments, lobotomy, and drug therapies.[11]

However, Hollingshead and Redlich pointed out that psychological professionals were not solely responsible for the poor fit between their profession and patients from disadvantaged socioeconomic positions. Psychological therapies, more than somatic therapies, work best when the patient is aware of the underlying problem and the proposed process of addressing it. Psychological work also requires a degree of active

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[10] The causal direction of this correlation became a significant research question in both sociology and psychology, most notably in the theory of "downward drift," which posited that an individual's mental illness resulted in downward mobility. For a later overview of the debate, see Bruce G. Link, Bruce P. Dohrenwend and Andrew E. Skodol, "Socio-Economic Status and Schizophrenia: Noisome Occupational Characteristics as a Risk Factor," *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 2 (April 1986): 242-258.

cooperation from the patient. Among the non-middle-class patients studied, few had a clear understanding of the therapeutic process: "Even among the class III's who were able to talk about their problems, there were some who never grasped the meaning of psychotherapy and hoped that 'after all the talking' comes 'the treatment.'"[12] Patients with lower socioeconomic status (SES) tended to perceive their problems as physical rather than emotional, and were often referred for psychological treatment after visiting a physician for a physical or psychosomatic problem. They tended to be more hostile to psychology and its practitioners than higher SES patients were, and they and their families generally viewed illness as something shameful. Once in treatment, low SES patients expected the therapist to be authoritative and tell them what to do, and were often frustrated when those expectations were not met. They also tended to expect the therapist to be emotionally warm and sympathetic, and were surprised and unhappy when this did not occur.[13]

For their part, the seventeen psychiatrists interviewed for the study were no more comfortable with their low SES patients than the patients were with them. They disapproved of these patients' language, vulgarity, violence, apathy, and sexual mores. They reported disliking class IV and V patients much more frequently than they disliked patients from the higher classes, and they described these patients as "a chore," "not interesting or attractive," and "worlds apart" from the therapists' own experience.[14]

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[11] For incidence rates, see Hollingshead and Redlich, 199; quote on 192; treatment differences, 275.
[12] Ibid., 339.
[13] Ibid., 340-343.
[14] Ibid., 344.

Hollingshead and Redlich wrote at length about their perceptions of the difference in "values" (their word, never fully defined) between the low-SES patients and the high-SES psychiatrists. At moments they seem to approach a position of cultural relativity, such as when they point out that "[t]he patients in classes I and II strive to live according to values which are not too far removed from the values of the psychiatrist. These values are neither 'high' nor 'low'; they are simply the values of the higher classes." The insistence that the higher-class values are not necessarily superior to other value sets is unusual for both sociological and psychological work in the era. Hollingshead and Redlich also made the point that, since psychological therapies relied so heavily on middle-class ways of thinking and communicating, other approaches should be found to reach patients from other classes.[15]

It is important to note here that while Hollingshead and Redlich foregrounded class differences in their report, ethnic and religious differences also undoubtedly contributed to the social distance between the practitioners and the patients. While this is never specifically addressed in terms of patient-practitioner relationships, the authors do describe the lower status of "persons from disapproved ethnic backgrounds—Jews, Irish, Italians, Greeks, Poles, and other from southern and eastern Europe" in their overview of the community. Additionally, they include quotes from high-status citizens disparaging ethnic "others," such as "Italians just swarmed into this area" and "The Poles and Italians

[15] Ibid., 348. Hollingshead and Redlich were not the first to approach cross-class values differences this way; psychiatrist Charles A. P. Brown had outlined differences in cultural perspective between underprivileged school children and the professionals who interact with them in 1951, but I have been unable to find any subsequent work that cites him. See Charles A. P. Brown, "Social Status as it Affects Psychotherapy," *Journal of Educational Sociology* 25, no. 3 (November 1951): 164-168.

gave us our vicious gangs."[16] Myers and Roberts' companion piece does describe the ethnic and religious backgrounds of the fifty patients selected for a more detailed case study, and unsurprisingly, an inverse relationship exists between class position and ethnic and religious diversity.[17] In light of this, the modern reader must remember that class differences are likely to account for only part of the practitioners' distaste for their class IV and V patients.

Hollingshead and Redlich's awareness of cultural difference, while exceptional for its time, had other limits as well. One particularly insightful review, though generally enthusiastic about the work, pointed out that the authors' analysis of their findings still reflected a middle-class perspective. For example, the review authors noted that when Hollingshead and Redlich outlined what lower-class patients seemed to want from therapy, it seemed as if they wanted "less" than what the professionals wanted to give them. In this view, the patients wanted a quick fix, while the professionals wanted more meaningful change for the patients. But, the reviewers wrote,

> … quite the opposite may be happening. Rather than asking for "less" than he is offered, the working class and lower class patient may actually be asking for "more" in the sense that he wants a fuller, more extensive, and more permanent relationship than is possible either within the traditional definition of the therapeutic relation or in terms of what the therapist wishes to enter into.[18]

In other words, even while trying to contextualize motivations and behaviors in terms of the subjects' own priorities, even sympathetic middle-class observers such as

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[16] Ibid., 72.
[17] Myers and Roberts, 44.

Hollingshead and Redlich are subject to misinterpretation based on their own cultural assumptions. In this case, they privileged the professional perspective that assumed current treatment models were universally valuable, and that lower-class patients' desire for different types of treatment reflected either a lack of understanding or laziness. The reviewers, however, sociologists S. M. Miller and Elliot G. Mishler, suggested that the deficiency was situated in the existing model of therapy itself, not in the unwilling patients.

The New Haven study had a dramatic impact on both sociology and psychology. In addition to bringing readers credible and engaging evidence of class inequalities, the work spawned scores of similar studies in both disciplines. Sociologists showed the most interest, and devised various instruments to correlate mental illness rates with social mobility, status striving, religious affiliation, and size of town, among other variables.[19] Theoretically, they continued to debate the nature-nurture controversy as well, though the debate tended to narrow to various possible mechanisms on the "nature" side, pitting proponents of social selection against proponents of "downward drift," or the idea that the mental illness itself caused the patient's downward mobility. Some sociologists argued that the stresses associated with a low socioeconomic status could be the

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[18] S. M. Miller and Elliot G. Mishler, "Social Class, Mental Illness, and American Psychiatry: An Expository Review," *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (April 1959): 174-199; 196.
[19] For a summary of some, but by no means all, of the research on the topic, see Robert J. Kleiner and Seymour Parker, "Goal-Striving, Social Status, and Mental Disorder: A Research Review," *American Sociological Review* 28, no. 2 (April 1963): 189-203.

precipitating factor in mental illness; however, this view was the minority opinion until the mid-1980s.[20]

While the psychological journals never published as much class-inflected work as the sociological journals did, the Hollingshead and Redlich study did inspire a number of psychological professionals to investigate various aspects of class within their own profession. Postwar psychological studies used class differences to examine treatment outcomes, psychotherapy, treatment duration, Rorschach and Thematic Apperception test results, psychosomatic illnesses, patient attrition, and a host of other issues.[21] And increasingly, these studies concluded that, as Hollingshead and Redlich had predicted, the profession needed to radically re-think the way it approached non-middle-class patients. However, as psychologists and the sociologists they collaborated with struggled to make sense of the class-based variations they saw in patients, treatment, and outcome, their analyses continued to be limited by cultural and professional preconceptions.

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[20] For a review of the literature as well as a compelling environmental argument, see Link, Dohrenwend and Skodol.

[21] J. Reusch, "Social Factors in Therapy," in *Psychiatric Treatment*, ed. S.B. Wortis, M. Herman, and C. C. Hare (Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins Company, 1953), 59-93; Leslie Schaffer and Jerome K. Myers, "Psychotherapy and Social Stratification," *Psychiatry* 17 (February 1954): 83-93; S. Imber, E. Nash, Jr., and E. R. Stone, "Social Class and Duration of Psychotherapy," *Journal of Clinical Psychotherapy* 11 (1955): 281; Haase, "Rorschach Diagnosis, Socio-Economic Class, and Examiner Bias," unpublished doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1956; cited in Miller and Mishler, p. 188, and in Frank Riessman and Sylvia Scribner, "The Under-Utilization of Mental Health Services by Workers and Low Income Groups: Causes and Cures," paper presented at the AFL-CIO Meeting on Mental Health, May 20-22 1964, NILER Box 5 Folder 12; Frank Riessman and S. M. Miller, "Social Class and Projective Tests," *Journal of Projective Tests* 22 (December 1958): 432-439; Thomas Rennie and Leo Srole, "Social Class Prevalence and Distribution of Psychosomatic Conditions in an Urban Population," *Psychosomatic Medicine* 18, no. 6 (1956): 449-457.

Beginnings: Sociology

The first social sciences to investigate class were economics and sociology, and American sociologists developed the understandings of class that would influence the psy professionals. Sociological thought originated in nineteenth-century Europe, where three of the discipline's "founding fathers"—Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim—developed approaches to class analysis that remain central to the field. In fact, until recently, American sociologists' views of class conformed either to those of the dominant Weberian camp, which saw stratification as multi-layered and primarily about status, or the much smaller Marxist camp, which identified two primary classes: an inherently exploitive capitalist class and an exploited proletariat.[22] While Marxist theory enjoyed significant influence in Europe, a variety of factors inhibited its acceptance in the United States, while simultaneously fostering the myth of American classlessness. Those factors include the lack of a formal aristocracy; the resultant strength of the country's capitalist class; the national rhetoric of egalitarianism; early widespread suffrage for white males; the "safety valve" of the frontier; the country's bountiful resources and comparative prosperity; the American ideal of rugged individualism; high levels of immigration and resultant xenophobia that divided workforces; the American conflation of race and class;

[22] Though loyalties to both Marxian and Weberian views certainly still exist in American sociology, recent work by scholars such as Erik O. Wright moves toward a synthesis of the two perspectives. See Wright, "The Shadow of Exploitation in Weber's Class Analysis," *American Sociological Review* 67, no. 6 (December 2002): 832-853; *Classes* (London: Verso, 1985); and *The Debate on Classes* (London: Verso, 1990). Also see Grimes, 209-211.

and America's pioneering development of a consumer culture that seemed to either mitigate or camouflage the inequalities of class.[23]

Despite most Americans' antipathy to Marxian analysis, other ideas that were loosely categorized as "social science" found fertile soil in the States. The reform movements of the mid-1800s fostered a belief that perfecting human environments could perfect human beings, creating hopes that a science of social phenomena could provide knowledge that would correct moral imperfections. Beginning in 1869, university courses with titles such as "social science," "sociology," "the philosophy of social relations," "science of society," and "progress of society" found their way into campuses around the country.[24] And while sociology had begun its theoretical development in Europe, the world's first academic department of sociology was established at the University of Chicago in 1892; aside from Durkheim's former school, the University of Bordeaux, European universities did not teach the subject.

The early American sociologists built on Auguste Comte's belief that human relations, like the natural sciences, were subject to invariable and specific "laws," and that a true science of human behavior would be developed. In the words of historian Dorothy Ross, they believed that sociology "was to be a science of the laws of history,

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[23] See Denning, "The Special American Conditions"; Cohen; Vanneman and Cannon; Lauter, *From Walden Pond to Jurassic Park*; and Jerome Karabel, "The Failure of American Socialism Reconsidered," *The Socialist Register* 16 (1979): 204-227.

[24] J. Graham Morgan, "Preparation for the Advent: The Establishment of Sociology as a Discipline in American Universities in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Minerva* 1-2 (March 1982): 25-58; course titles on 26-27.

hence the laws that governed the progress of civilization."[25] Two factors intensified this self-identification with the physical sciences in the late nineteenth century: first, the period's "culture of professionalization" led sociologists to align themselves with the unquestioned objectivity and clear standards of practice associated with physical science. Second, amid the intensified class conflicts of the Gilded Age, and with a view toward protecting their own status as professionals, academic sociologists were increasingly motivated to differentiate themselves from socialists and other radicals who called themselves "social scientists."[26]

But the post-Civil War period had been fraught with a degree of class antagonism that was new to the United States; before sociology was a field of study, social observers recognized that the country's industrialization had created a permanent class of wage laborers, along with capitalist exploitation, labor unrest, and fears of European-style class conflict. A number of nineteenth-century social scientists, particularly historical economists, became sympathetic to socialist agendas, but their privileged class identities and professional aspirations could not withstand the anti-radical backlash from the 1886 Haymarket riot. Leading economic scholars reconsidered their positions on socialism, undoubtedly impacting the perspectives of theorists in the developing sister field of sociology.[27]

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[25] Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 85.

[26] On professionalization, see Mark C. Smith, *Social Science in the Crucible: The American Debate over Objectivity and Purpose 1918-1941* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994), chapter 1. Fear of conflation with radicalism is addressed in Smith, chapter 1, and Ross, chapter 4.

[27] Many of the new sociologists, in fact, were initially trained as economists. For a compelling description of what she calls "The Threat of Socialism in Economics and Sociology," see Ross, chapter 4. Grimes also

In addition, many of the newly professionalizing universities actively discouraged ideas that were too "progressive."[28] Lester Frank Ward, considered a founding father of American sociology, found it necessary to caution a nephew who had accepted an appointment at Cornell. Citing an economist who had been fired from the university for his "advanced" views, which apparently consisted of sympathy for labor's perspective, Ward wrote, "I hope you will find Cornell in all respects satisfactory, but I have some slight misgivings lest you may find your liberty of thought and speech somewhat restricted there."[29] Similarly, Albion Woodbury Small, the first chair of the sociology department at the University of Chicago, faced university pressures that tempered his work. Small, a Baptist minister and social gospel reformer, wrote in a 1894 textbook that socialism had "mercilessly exposed social evils," though he acknowledged that it had been less effective in correcting them. Even such qualified praise of socialism was politically unacceptable for the times, however, and Small felt pressure to temper his activism. He acknowledged his retreat to a colleague, saying "although I hope to take up reform movements years hence, I am now going off in my lectures into transcendental philosophy so as to be as far as possible from these reform movements and thus establish the scientific character of my department."[30]

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acknowledges that pre-1930s sociology borrowed heavily from the theories and methods of both economists and anthropologists; p. 10.

[28] See Mary O. Furner, *Advocacy and Objectivity: A Crisis in the Professionalization of American Social Science, 1865-1905* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1975), especially chapters 7-9.

[29] Ward to E. A. Ross, personal correspondence of April 23, 1892, cited in Bernhard J. Stern. "The Ward-Ross Correspondence 1891-1896," *American Sociological Review* 3, no. 3 (June 1938): 362-401. Quote on 372.

[30] Edward A. Bemis to Richard Ely, personal correspondence of January 12, 1895, quoted in Ross, 133. For discussion of Small and socialism, see Ross, 123-138.

Most remaining sparks of socialist activism in sociology, as in other social sciences, were doused with the left's defeat in the 1896 presidential election. That contest had forged a radical coalition of laborers, farmers, and "free silver" foes of Eastern financial interests. The coalition was substantial enough to ignite fears of social revolution among contemporaries. But William Jennings Bryan, the nominee of both the Democratic and Populist parties, lost to William McKinley, and that defeat sounded a death knell to the era's radicalism. In the later Whiggish histories that sociologists constructed for themselves, early socialist sympathies simply didn't register. By 1940, when sociologist Charles Page published his compilation on sociology and class—the first of its kind—he could claim that the leading pioneers of American sociology were aware of class issues, but their treatment of those issues "were, in the final analysis, highly colored by the 'classlessness' of the American scene."[31]

Then, famously, the maverick University of Chicago economist Thorstein Veblen challenged that classlessness in 1899 with the publication of his now-classic *The Theory of the Leisure Class;* however, even that tour de force failed to convince most sociologists that class was rightfully a central issue in their field. In Veblen's view, American society was ruled by a "leisure class," a wealthy elite that continually reaffirmed its status through demonstrations of conspicuous leisure. This was possible because the members of this elite had no economic need to work, and because they had the resources to indulge in what Veblen called "conspicuous consumption." He was

[31] Charles Hunt Page, *Class and American Sociology: From Ward to Ross* (New York: The Dial Press, 1940), 250.

among the first to describe the now-commonsense connection between consumption and groups' attempts to maintain and demonstrate their place in the social hierarchy. Veblen's work, which was read far beyond academia, insisted that class stratification was inherently comparative and competitive. This view of economic behavior as jockeying for position flew in the face of mainstream economic thought, which held that economic activity was motivated by the rational desire of the individual to accumulate wealth for utilitarian purposes.[32]

While Veblen was no Marxist—his perspective was much more aligned with Weber's emphasis on status—he did agree with Marx's critique of capitalist exploitation: "There is no system of economic theory more logical than that of Marx."[33] However, Veblen was unconvinced by Marx's historical materialism, and believed neither in the inevitability of class revolution nor that such a revolution could promise a utopian, classless society. By 1906, he noted that socialist union members were modifying Marx's theory of class struggle, and he anticipated the possibility of exploitive hierarchies in ostensibly socialist and communist economic systems, if those systems were based on mechanized industry. Veblen also differed with Marx about the centrality of economic motivations in capitalist behavior, because for Veblen, the desire for power, not capital,

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[32] Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: New American Library, 1953 [1899]); Stephen Edgell, *Veblen in Perspective: His Life and Thought* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2001); and Roger Mason, *The Economics of Conspicuous Consumption: Theory and Thought Since 1700* (Northampton: Edward Elgar, 1998).

[33] Thorstein Veblen, "The Socialist Economics of Karl Marx and His Followers 1," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 20, no. 4 (Aug. 1906): 575-595; quote on p. 576.

was at the root of exploitation. Not surprisingly, Marxists disliked Veblen's work in turn, finding it not political.[34]

Despite its popular acclaim, Veblen's work has not had the impact on mainstream sociology that one might imagine. He coined and popularized now-familiar terms such as the "leisure class" and "conspicuous consumption," and he broke new ground in both economic theory and sociology, but his academic colleagues have been, for the most part, slow to acknowledge his import. Further, the scholars who have been the most influenced by Veblen, such as Robert and Helen Lynd and C. Wright Mills, have also tended to be outside the mainstream of sociological thought. Mainstream sociology, bound by its perceptions of scientific neutrality, professionalism, and American exceptionalism, could not embrace a serious analysis of class dominance, even in the assiduously apolitical form Veblen developed. Four decades later, sociologist Charles Hunt Page's pioneering 1940 overview of class in American sociology would note that Veblen's work, though widely known, "led directly to no major schools of class research or theory." In fact, Page continued, the topic had been so undervalued in sociology that "to many Americans,

[34] See Veblen, "The Socialist Economics of Karl Marx and His Followers 1," noted above; Veblen, "The Socialist Economics of Karl Marx and His Followers 2," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 21, no. 2 (Feb. 1907): 299-322; Geoffrey M. Hodgson, "Some Myths of Veblenian Institutionalism" in *Thorstein Veblen and the Revival of Free Market Capitalism,* ed. Janet T. Knoedler, Robert E. Prasch, and Dell P. Champlin (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2007); and Stjepan Gabriel Meštrović, *Thorstein Veblen on Culture and Society* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2003). For Marxist response to Veblen, see J. L. Simich and R. Tilman, "Thorstein Veblen and His Marxists Critics: An Interpretive Review," *History of Political Economy* 14, no. 3 (Fall 1982): 323-341.

including some professors of sociology, native class theory began and ended with Thorstein Veblen."[35]

Beginnings: Psychology

The word "psychology" has been used to describe the science of the soul or the science of mental life since the sixteenth century, yet the concept remained wedded to the field of philosophy for the next three hundred years. In the late 1800s, a "new psychology" took shape, so named to clearly differentiate it from the older mental and moral philosophies and to emphasize its scientism. Steeped in the era's post-Darwinian enthusiasm for the physical sciences, theorists interested in the processes of the mind turned increasingly toward empiricism. In 1879, the German physician Wilhelm Wundt established the world's first psychology laboratory to investigate the "inner experience" of sensation and perception. Four years later, a former student of Wundt's—G. Stanley Hall—instituted the first American psychology lab at Johns Hopkins University. By 1890, there were fifteen experimental psychology laboratories worldwide; within the next ten years, that number quadrupled. While labs were opened around Europe (and even in Japan), most of the new facilities were in Germany and the United States.[36]

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[35] Page, x. For mainstream sociology's indifference to Veblen's ideas, see Stjepan Gabriel Mestrovic, "Appreciating Veblen Without Idealizing or Demonizing Him," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 16, no. 1 (Fall 2002): 153-157.

[36] For critiques of traditional, Whiggish histories of psychology, see Philip Cushman, "Psychotherapy to 1992: A Historically Situated Interpretation" in *History of Psychotherapy: A Century of Change,* ed. Donald K. Freedheim (Washington: American Psychological Association, 1992), 21-64, and Roy Porter and Mark S. Micale, "Introduction: Reflections on Psychiatry and Its Histories" in *Discovering the Histories of Psychiatry,* ed. Mark S. Micale and Roy Porter (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 3-36. For the history itself, see Jansz, 12-44, especially 30; and Alan Kim, "Wilhelm Maximilian Wundt," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* ed. Edward N. Zalta (Fall 2008 Edition). Online: <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/wilhelm-wundt/>.

While the discipline's older, celebratory histories cite the empiricists as the field's sole founders, recent cultural theorists have identified a second early influence. They argue that late 19th century enthusiasm for a series of mental healing movements laid the foundations for the incredible growth of American psychology in the next century. Although mainstream psychologists almost unanimously rejected these popular therapies, mental healing established a precedent for public acceptance of both non-somatic cures and of talk therapy. The mid-nineteenth century popularity of mesmerism and phrenology set the stage for widespread religion-based mental healing movements such as "mind cure," which evolved into the New Thought movement, and then the church-based Emmanuel Movement. Though these practices and philosophies were not identical, they all shared the belief that illness, particularly emotional illness, was the result of incorrect perception or personal and spiritual inadequacies. Further, they shared the perception that these imbalances could be corrected by mental, not physical, processes.[37]

Most cultural histories locate the origins of the mind cure phenomenon in the work of Phineas Pankhurst Quimby, who pioneered a form of talk therapy in Maine between 1859 and 1866. Though an interest in mesmerism introduced Quimby to non-somatic therapies in the late 1830s, over the next two decades he rejected mesmerism and spiritualism as he developed his own "science" of what he called "mental therapeutics." He insisted that unhappiness, mental instability, and physical disease of all kinds were caused by "false ideas" and "ignorance of ourselves," problems which he purported to correct by talking one-on-one with patients. One of his patients, a woman with a long

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[37] Eric Caplan, *Mind Games: American Culture and the Birth of Psychotherapy* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1998); for mind cure, see chapter 4; for Emmanuel Movement, see chapter 6; Moskowitz,

history of various infirmities, was so impressed with the effectiveness of his approach that she published praises to him in the local newspaper. The patient, Mary Baker Eddy, went on to develop her own philosophy of mind cure and to found the Christian Science movement in 1879.[38]

The various popular mind-cure therapies indicate that broad swaths of the public rejected the reductionist scientificism embraced by much of that era's medical profession. More importantly, several historians argue that these popular approaches to cure pushed an unwilling medical community to take the mental components of nervous disease and recovery much more seriously. Through the nineteenth century, most theorists and researchers of the new psychology strove to establish their field as a credible science. Luminaries such as John Dewey and early American Psychological Association president James McKeen Cattell clearly distanced themselves from metaphysics and folk practices while seeking to align their discipline with the hard sciences. Even William James, who had more sympathy for popular mind cure therapies than the vast majority of his colleagues, argued that psychology was a natural science. However, James was critical of what he saw as the minutia of the German-influenced empiricism, and unlike Wundt and his followers, believed that psychology should draw on both the natural sciences and the humanities.[39]

As the new theorists of psychology worked to define their discipline at the end of the Victorian era, its elite practitioners unreflexively incorporated their own class perspectives and assumptions into their theories. The case of neurasthenia provides an

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chapter 1; and Cushman, 30-32.

[38] Caplan, 65-76; Moskowitz, chapter 1.

excellent example. Neurologist George Beard helped to popularize the condition of neurasthenia, or nervous exhaustion, in the 1880s. Beard and his colleagues attributed the rise of this malady to an increasingly competitive and stressful civilization, noting that the condition disproportionately afflicted the "comfortable classes." According to one historian, the disorder became something of a badge of status. The outpouring of literature on neurasthenia emphasized the fact that its sufferers tended to be professionals and wealthy patients, and attributed their symptoms to excessive mental work and strain. The result was that, according to Eric Caplan, "[t]he explicitly class-conscious rhetoric employed by Beard and others did far more than destigmatize nervousness and anxiety. It made them seem virtuous."[40]

Another modern observer of the neurasthenia wave has identified a slightly different, but complimentary, phenomenon. Although most neurasthenia patients were initially from the higher classes, as the diagnosis received more publicity, patient demographics diversified. By the early 1900s, a number of published case studies identified working-class men as neurasthenics. However, physicians tended to attribute different causes to the disorder, based on the patient's socioeconomic class. Professional men who developed neurasthenia were believed to suffer from overwork; in contrast, working-class men with the disorder were thought to have overindulged in alcohol, drugs, or sex. Clearly, turn-of-the-century psychological professionals were largely unaware of how their own class positions and assumptions affected their perceptions of patients.[41]

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[39] Caplan, chapter 4; Moskowitz, chapter 1; and Ward, chapter 2.
[40] On neurasthenia, see F. G. Gosling, *Before Freud: Neurasthenia and the American Medical Community, 1870-1910* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987); and Caplan, chapter 3; quote on 38.
[41] Gosling, 94-97.

The academic discipline of psychology, unheard of before Wundt established his laboratory in 1879, grew rapidly at the turn of the century. Johns Hopkins granted the first American Ph.D. in psychology in 1886; the next year, the *American Journal of Psychology* debuted as the country's first scholarly journal in the field, followed over the next several years by the *Psychological Review, Psychological Monographs,* and the *Psychological Bulletin*. In 1892, G. Stanley Hall founded the American Psychological Association (APA) with twenty-six original members. Six years later, APA membership had grown to 127, despite the association's refusal to admit amateurs. By 1904, sixty-two American colleges listed at least three psychology courses in each of their curricula.[42]

Intelligence Testing

As American psychology grew in the early twentieth century, it continued to develop in ways that reinforced middle-class values and aligned psychology with business interests. Part of this phenomenon was an indirect result of the psychologists' desire to be perceived as hard scientists, and their corresponding emphasis on experimental psychology; this orientation fostered the same value neutrality that distanced sociologists from sociopolitical analyses, while also focusing psychologists' attention on discrete, easily observable phenomena. Additionally, the discipline's early work in intelligence testing was developed within certain unexamined class assumptions, which subsequently contributed to the classed nature of the discipline,

Kurt Danziger, noted for historicizing psychological ideas, describes how the concept of "intelligence" as a hierarchical gradation of performance developed as a result

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[42] Donald S. Napoli, *Architects of Adjustment: The History of the Psychological Profession in the United States* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press Corp., 1981), 13-14, and Donald H. Blocher, *The Evolution*

of new demands on the educational system during the industrialization of the late nineteenth century. The need to standardize work, specialize tasks, evaluate output in quantitative terms, and instill new discipline on the workforce all led to a more formal, standardized, and quantifiable approach to education. At the same time, the new compulsory education laws that spread throughout the states from the mid-1800s through the turn of the century brought previously unserved populations into the schoolroom. All of these pressures exacerbated existing problems in the education system, and while a handful of reformers called for change in the system itself, most educators, along with most psychologists, focused on maximizing the efficiency of the existing system. One way in which they hoped to accomplish this was by more precisely evaluating which students were unlikely to benefit from education in the regular classroom. Early applied psychologists hoped that they could develop measurements of intelligence that could do just that.[43]

But, as contemporary critics of intelligence testing have pointed out, the tests themselves were developed operationally. Theorists, both in the early twentieth century and today, have been unable to develop a satisfactory definition of intelligence, so early efforts to devise tests that could predict or assess "intelligence" were fruitless. In 1905, attempting to develop an evaluative test for Paris schools, Alfred Binet was finally able to construct the first working intelligence test, but he acknowledged that his instrument did not truly measure the constellation of qualities typically meant by the term "intelligence."

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of Counseling Psychology (New York: Springer, 2000), 80.

[43] Kurt Danziger, *Naming the Mind: How Psychology Found Its Language* (London: Sage, 1997), 74-76. Also see Peter van Drunen and Jeroen Jansz, "Child-Rearing and Education," in Jansz and van Drunen, 45-92.

Binet insisted that intelligence was too multifaceted a concept to measure accurately with a single scale. However, to achieve the goal of identifying students who would be unable to benefit from the traditional classroom, Binet designed his test such that a given student's test results would correlate with teachers' evaluations of that student's "intelligence." In this, Binet's test proved effective.[44]

On this side of the Atlantic, however, American psychologists, particularly those influenced by the social Darwinist, hereditarian arguments popularized by Francis Galton, embraced the test as measuring a single, stable, innate characteristic, despite Binet's insistence that it did not. Further, they perceived this single characteristic of "intelligence" as being very much like the social Darwinist idea of "fitness." In this view, life was a continual test at which only the most capable would succeed; school was an arena in which this continual life test could be easily observed.[45] In describing how educational psychologists diverged from what he calls the "social point of view" shared by most educational reformers in the early twentieth century, education scholar Robert L. Church argues that "educational psychologists seemed the least optimistic, the least reformist of the educators of that period." [46]

It is important to remember the conditions which predisposed turn-of-the-century psychologists toward social Darwinism and away from reform: the idea of biologically inherited mental fitness dovetailed with psychologists' belief that they were indeed

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[44] Jonathan Harwood, "The IQ in History," *Social Studies of Science* 13, no. 3 (August 1983): 465-477; especially 469-470; and Danziger, 76-78.
[45] Danziger, 77-78; van Drunen and Jansz, 76.
[46] Robert L. Church, "Educational Psychology and Social Reform in the Progressive Era," *History of Education Quarterly* 11, no. 4 (Winter 1971): 390-405; quote on 395.

developing a hard science; the precision of quantitative testing was appealing for the same reason. Additionally, there was a significant stigma attached to being an "applied" scientist; Wundt had insisted that the development of a pure science of psychology would take a hundred years of gathering data before it would be appropriate to apply the information to real-world situations, As a result, especially after 1905, many educational psychologists referred to their work as "experimental pedagogy," focusing on the information-gathering aspects of their activities rather than any possible applications. With this focus, the amateur-inflected taint of reform could be avoided. Finally, despite the stigma of applied work, the real-world demands for mental testing in the fields of education, business, and later, the military, allowed practitioners of the fledgling profession to demonstrate their expertise to leaders of those fields as they worked to establish disciplinary legitimacy.[47]

Regardless of what it may have signified to early psychometricians, intelligence testing both reflects and reinforces class-based assumptions. While some historians of early psychometrics argue that intelligence testing offered an unprecedentedly meritocratic means of identifying worth, unrelated to family or status, that is a distinctly minority view.[48] More often—and more convincingly—evidence demonstrates the deeply elitist perspectives of early psychological professionals. Psychologist Robert Yerkes insisted that "[s]cience leaves no ground for the denial of human inequality."[49] In his view, socioeconomic classes were a natural and appropriate reflection of unequal

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[47] Church, 396-398. It is important to recognize, however, that there were exceptions: for example, William James and John Dewey both promoted psychology as a means to educational reform.
[48] Harwood, 470-471, and van Drunen and Jansz, 76.

physical and intellectual attributes. Psychiatrist Elmer Ernest Southard agreed, but thought that the sheer numbers of mental defectives would inevitably end the "quite unfounded" American belief in egalitarianism. These men's views were not exceptional, but rather representative of their field.[50]

Eugenics

Not surprisingly, intelligence testing was enthusiastically adopted by the eugenicist movement, which developed in the United States as a classist and racist attempt to "purify" American stock. The British gentleman-scientist Francis Galton, a cousin of Charles Darwin and the man who coined the term "eugenics," had a much more significant impact in the United States than in his own country. Galton insisted that heredity was overwhelmingly more important than environment in determining intelligence. As a result, he proposed social engineering to expand the stock of "superior" genes—in his view, genes from more educated, higher-class, Caucasian individuals—and to limit the reproduction of "inferior" genes—those from less educated, poorer, and non-Caucasian people. Galton's ideas resonated with social Darwinists, and the fact that his arguments were developed in biological terms appealed to American psychologists' predilection for hard science. Further, the American public was already concerned about degeneration of the American "stock"; President Theodore Roosevelt had popularized the idea of "race suicide," a phrase coined by the sociologist Edward Ross to describe the idea that white, educated, native-born Americans were experiencing declining birthrates at the same time that immigrants, minorities, and other "undesirables" were procreating

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[49] Robert M. Yerkes, "How May We Discover the Children Who Need Special Care?" *Mental Hygiene* 1 (1917): 252.

rapidly. While most contemporary accounts emphasize the racist nature of eugenics, it is important to remember its classed nature as well.[51]

The most broadly popularized eugenic study exemplifies the classist nature of the field. In 1912, psychologist Henry H. Goddard published *The Kallikak Family: A Study in the Heredity of Feeble-Mindedness.*[52] Goddard traced two very different lines of a single family tree from a Revolutionary War veteran he called Martin "Kallikak," a fictitious name he created from a hybrid of the Greek words for "good" and "bad." One side of the family tree descended from Kallikak and his wife, a "respectable girl of a good family."[53] Generations later, these members of the Kallikak clan were successful, prominent citizens. However, Kallikak had, in his youth, sired a child with a "feeble-minded" barmaid, and the descendents of Kallikak's illegitimate child were plagued with mental deficiencies, immorality, promiscuity, epilepsy, poverty, criminality, and poor health.

Goddard claimed that the differences documented in this case study proved the hereditary nature of feeblemindedness, pauperism, and vice. The book was extremely well received, both among the public and other psychologists; it went through several printings and was cited in positive terms in many psychology textbooks.[54] The early psychological community, convinced that complex social problems were genetic, and, in

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[50] Elmer Ernest Southard, cited in Lunbeck, 62.

[51] Gerald Sweeney, "'Fighting for the Good Cause': Reflections on Francis Galton's Legacy to American Hereditarian Psychology," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series 91, no. 2 (2001): i-136; see pp. vii, 1-2; Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in The United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 201-202.

[52] Henry Herbert Goddard, *The Kallikak Family: A Study in the Heredity of Feeble-Mindedness* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912).

[53] Goddard, 29.

[54] Raymond E. Fancher, "Henry Goddard and the Kallikak Family Photographs: 'Conscious Skulduggery' or 'Whig History'?," *American Psychologist* 42, no. 6 (June 1987): 585-590; and Steven A. Gelb, Garland

historian Eva Moskowitz's words, "[u]tterly blind to the realities of class," enthusiastically promoted eugenics: early APA president James McKeen Cattell, Harvard psychologist Robert Yerkes, turn-of-the-century dean of educational psychology Edward L. Thorndike, Harvard psychiatrist Elmer Ernest Southard, 1912 American Medico-Psychological Association president Hubert Work, and prominent psychiatrist and neurologist Pierce Bailey all advocated various strategies of population engineering to stem what they saw as the exponential growth of undesirable citizens.[55]

While the United States was certainly not the only country in which eugenic ideas gained prominence, it did see a deeper entrenchment of "negative" eugenics than did most European countries. While proponents of "positive" eugenics believed that they could engineer a better world by populating it with more "fit" individuals, negative social engineering—active attempts to decrease the population of the "unfit"—also made great strides in this country, unfettered as it was by the types of national legislation that protected individuals from surgical sterilization in most European countries. By the time the first state—Indiana—passed legislation specifically permitting eugenic sterilization in 1907, one of its reformatory physicians had already sterilized 206 inmates, and had urged the governor to "insist upon the General Assembly passing such a law or laws as will provide this as a means of preventing procreation in the defective and degenerate classes." Over the next quarter century, twenty-nine more states adopted compulsory

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E. Allen, Andrew Futterman and Barry A. Mehler, "Rewriting Mental Testing History: The View from the *American Psychologist*," *Sage Race Relations Abstracts* 11, no. 2 (May 1986): 18-31; see 26-27.

[55] Moskowitz, 75; Nathan G. Hale, Jr., *Freud and the Americans: The Beginnings of Psychoanalysis in the United States, 1876-1917* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 80, 496; Sweeney, 1; and Edwin Black, *War Against the Weak: Eugenics and America's Campaign to Create a Master Race* (New York: Four Walls and Eight Windows, 2003).

sterilization laws. By the time the eugenics movement fragmented in the face of Hitler's horrors, roughly 20,000 "unfit" had been sterilized. Often, poverty or poor education—a correlate of poverty—were the only "genetic" reasons given for sterilization.[56]

The Influence of World War I

Psychologists, still anxious to establish the legitimacy of their profession, were eager to offer their expertise to the government in World War I. While psychology's foray into the national sphere during the Great War was hardly an unqualified success, it did establish a precedent of involvement that the profession would build on. It also provides modern observers with examples of the continuing class assumptions of the profession. Two days after Congress declared war, then-president of the APA, Harvard psychologist Robert Yerkes, established twelve committees to develop psychology's roles in the war effort. While Yerkes couched his call to action in the most patriotic of terms, some of his colleagues believed that Yerkes' real purpose had more to do with conducting a large-scale experiment of intelligence testing than with providing useful service to the military. Apparently, a number of military officers shared that concern.[57]

Only two of the original twelve committee programs panned out: Yerkes' committee revised the standard intelligence test to create the first group intelligence test, eventually administering it to 1.7 million recruits during the course of the war. The other

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[56] For the Indiana reformatory physician, see Elof Axel Carlson, *The Unfit: A History of a Bad Idea* (Cold Spring Harbor, NY: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, 2001), 207-212; quote on 211; for the total number of sterilizations in the U.S., see "Eugenics," *Gale Encyclopedia of Psychology*, 2nd ed. (Gale Group, 2001), online <http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_g2699/is_0001/ai_2699000124>. For perceptions of pauperism as biological, and descriptions of uneducated people wrongly declared "feebleminded," see Black, especially chapter one.

[57] Daniel J. Kevles, "Testing the Army's Intelligence: Psychologists and the Military in World War I," *The*

successful committee developed a separate psychological testing program to evaluate aptitude for different military vocations and tasks, including artillerymen, officers, and aircraft pilots. These aptitude tests were used to screen 3.5 million men. However, the work of both groups met with stiff resistance from old-school military officers. They resented civilian interference in traditionally military decisions about assignments and promotions; they were also impatient with a formal testing instrument that tended to agree with officers' own assessments of their men. In the words of the commander of Fort Dix, he needed psychologists to evaluate his men as much as he needed "a board of art critics to advise me which of my men were the most handsome." The choice of comparison must have particularly rankled the science-minded psychologists, but was likely an accurate assessment of how they were perceived by established military men: overintellectualized and effete.[58]

One persistent area of disagreement between the psychologists and the military leaders involved the meaning and worth of the concept of "intelligence." While the tests—and the psychologists developing them—valued those with scholastic skills, military commanders had other priorities. One noted that a draftee in his unit who had received a "D" rating on the intelligence test (on a scale of A-E, with E being least intelligent) was "a model of loyalty, reliability, cheerfulness, and the spirit of serene and

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Journal of American History 55, no. 3 (December 1968): 565-581.

[58] For intelligence and vocational tests, see van Drunen, Strien, and Haas, 144; for initial response to war and aviation testing, see Napoli, 22-24; for military resistance, see Kevles, 574-577; quote on 575.

general helpfulness. … What do we care about his 'intelligence'?"[59] The officers' objections anticipated those of later twentieth-century critics who exposed the classed, raced, and culture-based nature of instruments that were purported to be measures of "native intelligence." But of course, the psychologists did care about "intelligence": they were academicians, after all. Further, they cared about intelligence because intelligence was what their tests could measure, and they struggled to convince military officials that the information they could provide would be helpful.

In the final analysis, skeptical military officials blocked psychologists from maintaining any real influence in the armed forces after the war. Psychologists' contributions were acknowledged in 1918 when General Order no. 74 officially recognized the Psychological Division, but the same order subordinated psychological examiners under the command of post surgeons, a tactical loss that the psychologists had hoped to avoid. A later ruling specifically assigned medical practitioners, not psychologists, the ability to eliminate mental defectives from military service. On the other hand, the profession won clear gains from the war as well: intelligence testing expanded exponentially, becoming an essential tool for public schools, university admissions systems, and business. Clinical psychology, the practice of therapeutic work with patients, expanded from its original focus on children and learning to include adults and psychological difficulties, particularly in veterans' hospitals. The field that would come to be known as industrial-organizational psychology received an enormous boost

[59] Reported by Colonel R. J. Burt, an investigator for the General Staff, in a report to Chief of Staff June 18, 1918; quoted in Kevles, 575.

from the development of standardized testing during the war. Additionally, psychologists' wartime service enhanced the credibility of the profession, both with the public and with members of other disciplines.[60]

The 1920s afforded psychology a prominent place in the popular culture of the educated classes. Psychology seemed new, scientific, sophisticated, and slightly racy, with its emphasis on sexuality and the unconscious. It stepped decisively into the public sphere as fodder for magazine articles and cocktail party banter. Additionally, as the self came to be defined by "personality" rather than character, psychologists were well positioned to provide instruction.[61] Ph.D. programs in psychology expanded, as did the number of graduates, many of whom went back to work in those same programs. The discipline also developed a significant presence in the business arena as applied psychologists pioneered industrial-organizational psychology.[62] All of these developments, however, underscored psychology's elite status and, as detailed further in chapter two, its affiliation with the managerial classes.

Interwar Sociology and Community Studies: Middletown

Progressive Era reformers developed the community study as a vehicle for urban reform. In what came to be known as the social survey movement, more than 3,000 community studies were conducted between the turn of the century and the 1930s. But

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[60] Kevles, 577; Napoli, 25-27; and Michael J. Zickar, "An Analysis of Industrial-Organizational Psychology's Indifference to Labor Unions in the United States," *Human Relations* 57, no. 2 (2004): 145-167; 147.

[61] Warren Susman, "'Personality' and the Making of Twentieth-Century Culture" in *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 271-286.

until 1929, the studies had a parochial, preaching note; they tended to be written for town leaders, whose support the researchers generally cultivated; and their reports clearly described what the researchers felt sure should be done.[63] However, beginning in 1929 with the publication of Robert and Helen Merrill Lynd's *Middletown: A Study in Modern American Culture,* a new type of community earned legitimacy in the social sciences. Typically borrowing the detached, analytical stance of the anthropologist, the new community studies attempted to describe taken-for-granted details and patterns of daily life as if from a stranger's perspective. This flurry of studies, popular from 1929 through the 1940s, examined all aspects of the ways an individual community functioned. These heavily publicized research projects drew new attention to the concept of socioeconomic stratification in the United States.

The first major American analysis of social class divisions was the Lynds' anthropologically influenced investigation of "Middletown," their fictional name for Muncie, Indiana. However, class was not what they had set out to examine. Robert Lynd was neither an anthropologist nor a sociologist, but rather a theologian whose graduate training consisted of a couple of exchange courses he was able to take at Columbia University while enrolled at Union Theological Seminary. Despite his lack of formal training in either sociology or class analysis, though, Lynd did bring an important asset to

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[62] For accounts of psychology's development in the 1920s, see Burnham, chapter three, and Napoli, chapters two and three.

[63] Lewis A. Friedland and Kathryn B. Campbell, "Connected Research: The Chicago School Precedent," in *Qualitative Research in Journalism: Taking It to the Streets,* ed. Sharon Hartin Iorio (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004): 21-40, especially 31-33; and Richard Jensen, "The Lynds Revisited," *Indiana Magazine of History* 75 (December 1979): 303-319; especially 304.

his fieldwork: that intangible perspective that Grimes called our "unique experiences as incumbents of class positions."[64]

Two experiences in particular seem to have shaped Lynd's outlook on class. According to his son, Lynd's background was modest; he was the first of his family members to attend college, and when he did, "he went to Princeton, the snobbery of which left permanent scars."[65] In addition, Lynd's class perspective was clarified when he took a summer preaching internship at an impoverished oil camp in Wyoming. The Rockefeller family held a controlling interest in the camp, and the contrast between the grinding poverty of the inhabitants and the profit-driven callousness of the owners changed the course of Lynd's life. He left the ministry and became a social scientist and writer, eventually receiving a grant from the Institute of Social and Religious Research to study Protestant churches in a small community. However, the Lynds came to believe that the only way to understand the role of the church would be to understand the entire community. Applying the objectivist perspective of anthropology to a community studies model, the Lynds expanded their project to examine all aspects of Muncie's culture.[66]

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[64] Robert and Helen Lynd, *Middletown: A Study in Modern American Culture* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1929); for Lynd's academic training, see Mark C. Smith, "Robert Lynd and Consumerism in the 1930's," *The Journal of the History of Sociology* 2, no. 1 (Fall-Winter 1979-80): 99-119; 99 and 112. It is worth noting, however, that the Columbia courses he took were taught by the prominent economist Wesley Mitchell and the renowned philosopher John Dewey. Additionally, as Michael Grimes reminds us, the Lynds' reliance on anthropological theories and methods was very common among sociologists until the 1930, when the discipline began developing its own (Grimes, 10). Grimes quote on xi.

[65] Staughton Lynd, "Robert S. Lynd: The Elk Basin Experience," *The Journal of the History of Sociology* 2, no. 1 (Fall-Winter 1979-80): 14-22; quote on 14.

[66] For a much more thorough discussion of the Lynds' backgrounds, influences, and perspectives, see Smith, *Social Science in the Crucible,* chapter 4.

While community studies were nothing new, the Middletown project did break new ground in several ways; as a community study, it took an objectivist, scientific approach rather than the progressive, "uplifting" approach common to community studies of the day. It was also the first to detail the impact of modernization on all aspects of people's lives. Most importantly, it was also the first to document the centrality of class position to modern American life. Robert Lynd had been heavily influenced by Veblen's work, as well as by his desire for social justice and his experience in the Wyoming oil camp; and as a result, a sensitivity to class differences informed his analysis from the beginning.[67]

Although the Lynds' class analysis may seem simplistic to modern observers, since it identifies only two broad classes (the business and working classes), that analysis clearly—even bluntly—emphasizes the importance of class:

> [I]t is after all this division into working class and business class that constitutes the outstanding cleavage in Middletown. The mere fact of being born upon one side or the other of the watershed roughly formed by these two groups is the most significant single cultural factor tending to influence what one does all day long throughout one's life; whom one marries; when one gets up in the morning; whether one belongs to the Holy Roller or Presbyterian church; or drives a Ford or a Buick; whether or not one's daughter makes the desirable high school violet club; … and so on indefinitely throughout the daily comings and goings of a Middletown man, woman, or child.[68]

And, in fact, a great deal of the 550-page volume delineates the "outstanding cleavage" between the lives of the working class and the business class. Every aspect of life reflects this schism, from the age at which males begin working for pay (14 to 18 for

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[67] For Veblen's influence on Lynd, see Smith, 133-134.
[68] Lynd, 1929, 23-24.

the working class, 18-22 for the business class) to the time of morning that an employee must be at work, the length of the working day, prospects for retirement, types and amount of leisure, and prospects for children's education. In addition, the Lynds emphasize the economic, systemic, and structural conditions that constrain the life chances of the working class, apparently in an attempt to refute "the traditional social philosophy [which] assumes that each person has a large degree of freedom to climb the ladder to ever wider responsibility, independence, and money income."[69]

The incisiveness of the Lynds' community study made the book a best seller and won Robert Lynd a professorship in sociology at Columbia University in 1931. However, even scholars who applauded the Lynds' approach seemed reluctant to describe it with the language of "class," a word with disturbingly politicized connotations. As Leonard Reissman, a mid-century sociologist, explained, "Marx succeeded in giving class a revolutionary connotation and identifying it almost completely with his theory and its politics. In that form, 'class' became synonymous with 'revolution' and 'radicalism.'"[70] As a result, many social scientists avoided the word, as did the political scientist who lionized Robert Lynd for thirteen pages for his "concentration on power," his "power analysis," and his "commitment to power," presumably facilitated by the clear view afforded by what this commentator called Lynd's "power glasses." While the modern reader may find the image of power glasses amusing, the odd image underscores the

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[69] Ibid., 65.

[70] For reception of *Middletown* and Lynd's Columbia appointment, see Smith, 140-141, and Collins and Makowsky. 192-193. The quote about Marxist associations with the word "class" is from Leonard Reissman, *Class in American Society* (Glencoe IL: The Free Press, 1959), 20-21.

convolutions undertaken by many mid-century scholars to avoid the Marxist connotations associated with existing descriptions of class.[71]

Despite Middletown's popular acclaim, the Lynds' work was largely ignored by sociologists, and the Lynds themselves were dubbed "untheoretical." This professional disapproval could have stemmed from a variety of factors, including the Lynds' focus on class, their "outsider" status in academia, and quite possibly because of their work's popular acclaim among the general public, Paradoxically, the fact that Middletown was published at the onset of the Great Depression may partly explain its enthusiastic public reception as well as its sociological marginalization. While a credible, accessible description of class differences apparently resonated with the American public in the midst of bread lines and Hoovervilles, sociologists distanced themselves from the country's crisis.[72]

In a recent history, sociologist Charles Camic details how early in the Depression, sociologists—disappointed with the abrupt constriction of the growth their discipline had experienced in the 1920s, bitter about the prominence of economists and political scientists as public arbiters of the crisis, and stubbornly clinging to a self-image of objective scientificism—simply ignored the Depression.[73] In December 1929, less than two full months after the crash, ASA president William F. Ogburn insisted that "sociology as a science is not interested in making the world a better place to live…or in

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[71] Lynd's "power glasses" are described in John H. Bunzel, "Commitment to Power of Robert S. Lynd," *Ethics* 71, no. 2 (Jan. 1961): 90-103; 91. For functionalist avoidance of the word "class," see Grimes, 93.
[72] For Lynds' outsider status, see Jensen, 305.
[73] Charles Camic, "On Edge: Sociology during the Great Depression and the New Deal" in *Sociology in America: A History,* ed. Craig J. Calhoun (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 225-280.

guiding the ship of state."[74] Most sociologists seemed to agree. While other disciplines such as economics, political science, and social work produced Depression-related work early in the financial crisis, sociology was strangely silent on the subject until the mid-1930s. As Camic emphasizes, "before 1934 nothing about the Depression—not its causes, its diverse ramifications, nor any other aspect of it—roused the interest of sociologists as a topic for academic investigation or as an entry point into policy discussions."[75] Sociologists remained certain that their discipline's future depended on rigorous scientificism, not what they perceived as reformist partisanship.

American Sociology's Dominant Paradigm: Functionalism

The scientific model also corresponded closely to one of Emile Durkheim's lasting contributions to sociological theory, his conception of society as functioning like a biological organism. As might be imagined, this is far from a perfect analogy, and the biological model of society has been discredited. However, during its dominance, it fostered a view of society that deemphasized conflict between groups, and consequently minimized the importance of class. From this perspective, all parts of society function together to ensure the smooth continuance of the organism, striving for equilibrium. Because of this emphasis on equilibrium, Durkheim saw social institutions as positive forces, serving to promote the interests of the society as a whole.[76]

Beginning in the 1930s, prominent Harvard sociologist Talcott Parsons developed a theory that combined Durkheim's social organism with Freud's superego and its role in

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[74] William F. Ogburn, "The Folkways of a Scientific Sociology," *Publication of the American Sociological Society* 24 (1930): 1-11.
[75] Camic, 259.

socialization. The result was the contemporary concept of functionalism, which reigned as the dominant sociological paradigm into the early 1960s. Functionalism's premise is that, since the whole society functions as if it were a biological organism, all parts of that society work together for the collective good; not just various groups, but society's institutions, its norms, and its rules all have a positive function, and all work together for the greater good of the whole. This emphasis on the interdependence of different groups rather than competition between them tends to support the status quo. Similarly, the functionalist vision of society assumes that conflict, rather than being the inevitable outcome of struggles for shares of prestige, resources, etc., is instead the result of deviance. As a result, this perspective legitimized the myth of American classlessness.[77]

We can see how functionalists naturalize obvious stratification by making it seem like the just outcome of natural processes. In 1949, sociologist Robert E. Clark attempted to describe why some parts of a city were worse than others: "Most of the differences in composition of the populations of ecological areas [parts of the city] are traditionally related to the fundamental process of competition which is, for the most part, economic competition. Through competition, different types of persons become segregated." This

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[76] Durkheim's most notable contributions to what we now consider a functionalist perspective are *The Division of Labor in Society* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1947 [1893]) and *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life: A Study in Religious Sociology* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1947 [1912]).

[77] For a thorough discussion of Parsons' role in shaping sociological functionalism, see Collins and Makowsky, chapter 11. On the functionalist perspective and its dominance in sociological thought, see Robert W. Friedrichs, *A Sociology of Sociology* (New York: The Free Press, 1970); Stephen Park Turner and Jonathan H. Turner, *The Impossible Science: An Institutional Analysis of American Sociology* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1990), especially chapters 3 and 4; and Grimes, chapter 4 .

functionalist description claims that economic and social inequalities are the result of "competition," much in the same way social Darwinist thought did.[78]

From the 1940s into the early 1960s, Parsons was the dean of the field, and functionalism was synonymous with sociology. In fact, the functionalist worldview was so pervasive in sociology that the perspective was not seen as an orientation, but rather as objective, scientific "truth." Functionalism was similar in perspective to the consensus view of history that also dominated its discipline in this period; in fact, some observers refer to mid-century functionalism as the "consensus school" of sociology. And like consensus history, functionalism both reflected and helped to shape the conformist, consensus-oriented views of the postwar era. Parsons was stridently anti-Marxist, and a number of later observers have argued that Parsons' functionalist theory was an explicit response to Marxism, providing "the only way professionals within American sociology could tolerably deal with big issues without being dismissed to Marxian marginalia."[79]

A Functionalist Community Study: Yankee City

The next major sociological study of American class after Middletown also came from an investigator trained in another field. In 1930, anthropologist W. Lloyd Warner began fieldwork for his Yankee City series, a large-scale community study of Newburyport, Massachusetts that consumed the efforts of roughly 30 researchers and

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[78] Robert E. Clark, "Psychoses, Income, and Occupational Prestige," *American Journal of Sociology* 44 (March 1949): 443-440; quote on 443.

[79] The term "consensus history" was coined by John Higham in "The Cult of the 'American Consensus': Homogenizing Our History," *Commentary* 27 (February 1959), 93-100. Grimes describes functionalism as the "consensus" school of sociology, p. 11. For the anti-Marxism of Parsons and functionalism, see Alvin Gouldner, *The Coming Crisis in Western Sociology* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), 177, and Irving Horowitz, *C. Wright Mills: An American Utopian* (New York: Free Press, 1983), 177.

assistants for almost five years.[80] Warner had been working with Elton Mayo on the Western Electric studies and realized that in order to study workers, one needed to better understand their lives outside of work.[81]

Warner's perspective on class was more ambiguous than that of the Lynds. Warner's father was a middle-class rancher and engineer in California, but at a time and place in which class stratification was much less important than it was in the East or than it would be later. As an undergraduate at the University of California at Berkeley in the late 1910s, Warner was an active member of the Socialist Party. However, this seems to have been a period of experimentation; around the same time, he also tried his hand at acting in New York and briefly married. He returned to school, earned a bachelor's degree in anthropology in 1925, and as a doctoral candidate at Harvard between 1929 and 1935, eventually wrote and published (but never defended) his dissertation about Australian aborigines.[82]

Given his early interest in socialism, it is not surprising that, unlike the Lynds, Warner approached his first community study with an overtly socioeconomic agenda, believing that "the most fundamental structure of our society, that which ultimately controls and dominates the thinking and actions of our people, is economic."[83] However, Warner was also firmly embedded in the era's dominant theoretical paradigm of

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[80] Stephan Thernstrom, "'Yankee City' Revisited: The Perils of Historical Naïveté," *American Sociological Review* 30, no. 2 (April 1965): 234-242; 236; and Grimes, 65.
[81] The Western Electric studies are discussed more fully in chapter two's examination of industrial psychology.
[82] "William Lloyd Warner," *World of Sociology* (Gale, 2005-2006). Online at http://www.bookrags.com/biography/william-lloyd-warner-soc/.

sociological functionalism. His acceptance of this paradigm predisposed him to emphasize cooperation rather than conflict between groups. This functionalist justification of the status quo is evident in the first volume of Warner's Newburyport findings, 1941's *The Social Life of a Modern Community*. The second paragraph of the preface outlines the project's goal of describing "the way in which these people have been divided into superior and inferior classes," but the following paragraph reassures readers that "our New England subjects live a well-ordered existence according to a status system maintained by [the community's] several social institutions."[84]

The contrast with the Lynds is clear. The Lynds' study—intended to focus on church and modernization—had demonstrated class inequalities in the community, while Warner's study—ostensibly intended to focus on class—portrayed harmoniously coexisting status groups. In Warner's presentation, even those individuals identified as belonging to the most subordinated group (the "lower-lower" group, in Warner's terminology) were markedly optimistic about their chances of upward mobility in the land of the American Dream. One of the main ways in which Warner's study unintentionally deemphasized inequality was by its use of a six-level status gradient to categorize socioeconomic positions. Warner claimed that the levels—lower-lower class, upper-lower, lower-middle, upper-middle, lower-upper, and upper-upper—reflected what

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[83] W. Lloyd Warner and Paul Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1941), 81.

[84] For a thorough discussion of Warner's functionalist perspective, see Grimes, chapter 3. The study's four subsequent volumes are: W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Status System of a Modern Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942); W. Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole, *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945); W. Lloyd Warner and J. 0. Low, *The Social System of the Modern Factory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947); W. Lloyd Warner, *The Living and the Dead: A Study of the Symbolic Life of Americans* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959). Quote in Warner and Lunt, 1941, xix.

community members themselves would describe in interviews. Additionally, Warner attempted to naturalize the categorizations, as in his discussion of "How the Several Classes Were Discovered." The use of the word "discovered" implies that the categories existed in Newburyport's natural social state, and that the social scientist simply had to uncover them, as an anthropologist would uncover dinosaur bones or a biologist would uncover cellular structure. "Discovered," here, both reestablishes the project as "true" science, and camouflages the fact that the researchers actually manufactured this particular status gradient.

While it certainly sounded more precise than the Lynds' two-tiered class structure, Warner's six-layered stratification positioned his findings in specific ways: first, the emphasis on status gradients deemphasized the power differential between (in the Lynds' typology) the business class and the working class. Second, as a contemporary reviewer noted, the six-level structure gives the illusory view "that the class structure is not pyramidal in shape"—it makes the class populations seem fairly evenly distributed. But, as the reviewer continues, "if instead of six we take the usual threefold classification, we find that the upper class has 3 per cent of the total, the middle class 38 per cent, and the lower class 58 per cent—definitely pyramidal."[85] Again, the effect deemphasizes inequality.[86]

There were other problems with Warner's approach. A young C. Wright Mills

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[85] Kingsley Davis, review of *The Status System of a Modern Community*, by W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The American Journal of Sociology* 48, no. 4 (January 1943): 511-513; quote on 513.

[86] I do not mean to imply that Warner constructed this categorization to intentionally downplay inequalities. Rather, I suspect that his functionalist orientation, combined with his desire to present his work as "scientific," made the six-tiered structure seem ideal for his purpose and unproblematic.

wrote a blistering review that took Warner to task for undertheorizing the concept of class. Mills, drawing on Weber, argues that Warner's material deals with economic, status, and power differences, but neglects to articulate them as such and instead blurs them all together. In fact, according to Mill, Warner's schema primarily ranks people via status, but fails to interrogate the economic component of those status positions. In short, for Mills, Warner's work was "more painstaking than skillful."[87] Additionally, a decade later, a few sociologists questioned Warner's impartiality, claiming that his informants were disproportionately drawn from the higher classes and from people with aspirations of upward mobility—in other words, people who shared the higher classes' values and perceptions. Critics similarly claim that Warner was overly susceptible to the perspective of the group he called the "upper uppers," an old-money elite that made up less than 2% of Newburyport's population.[88] In short, Warner's work and findings tended to reinforce the status quo and to reflect the dominant cultural perspective of the period.

This orientation did not, however, dampen the enthusiastic reception of his work, nor its influence on sociology. Despite the few critical receptions cited above, the overwhelming majority of responses were positive. The Newburyport study produced five books, and inspired Warner to conduct a similar community study in a Midwestern town, "Jonesville." The six-level structure used for Newburyport was condensed to a

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[87] C. Wright Mills, "The Social Life of a Modern Community," *American Sociological Review* 7, no. 2 (April 1942): 263-271; quote on 263.

[88] Seymour M. Lipset and Reinhard Bendix, "Social Status and Social Structure: A Re-Examination of Data and Interpretations: I," *The British Journal of Sociology* 2, no. 2 (June 1951): 150-168; see 163; and Thernstrom, 239. Thernstrom also supports an argument that Warner's early Yankeetown volumes suffered from ahistoricism, and the later ones from poor historical analysis; as Thernstrom says of the later work,

five-level structure in the Jonesville study, since in the newer Midwest there was less differentiation between the "old family" and "new wealth" categories, and the five-level structure was widely adopted by other social scientists. And *Life* magazine ran a ten-page feature on Warner and his work in 1949, featuring photo layouts of families in each of the six levels. Not surprisingly, the *Life* piece trumpeted the functionalist perspective at every turn, full of peppy assurances such as "[American] democracy is like a ladder. Anyone can climb it…."[89]

The *Life* vignette documenting the "lower-lower" family reinforces that optimistic sentiment. It describes the family's home in a trailer camp just outside of town, where the only showers are communal, residents cook on hot plates after recent gasoline stove fires, and the neighbors "include Negroes." But this story of the sample "lower-lower," Sam Sygulla and his family, ends optimistically:

> Right now, in terms of his houses and job and his social position in general, Sam is at the bottom of the ladder. But he has dreams. He is excited about an air-conditioning training program in Chicago, which he may join. If things don't work out he also has a plan to go to Rio de Janeiro. If he can make part of his dreams come true … Sam will have begun the slow but feasible climb upward.[90]

The photos of the family draw the same contrast between actual material conditions and the Sygullas' faith in the American Dream. Despite bare light bulbs with visible electrical cords snaking up, down, and diagonally across dingy walls; despite

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"Warner's new-found appreciation of history did not lead him to any critical awareness of what constituted historical *evidence*," 242.

[89] "A Sociologist Looks at an American Community," *Life*, 12 September 1949, 108-118; quote on 109. While no author is cited, photojournalism pioneer and then-*Life* employee Margaret Bourke-White is credited for the photography.

[90] Ibid., 110.

Sam's blue jeans, his wife's head scarf, and their half-naked toddler; despite the crowded rows of unadorned metal trailers on flat, barren tarmac; despite even being held up to the world as a representative "lower-lower," Sam smiles. The photos help the viewer believe in that "slow but feasible climb," just as Sam seems to. Apparently unaware of the actual likelihood of upward mobility from his "lower-lower" position, Sam demonstrates the American tendency to see individual attributes, not structural ones, as the determinant of class position.[91]

A Non-Functionalist Community Study: Elmtown

One last community study deserves mention. August Hollingshead, who later co-authored *Social Class and Mental Illness* with Fredrick Redlich, had worked with Warner in the study that Warner published as *Democracy in Jonesville.* Hollingshead published his own findings the same year as Warner's in *Elmtown's Youth: The Impact of Social Classes on Adolescents*. Hollingshead, the son of a middle-class stock breeder, spent his early childhood on a Wyoming ranch, then moved with his family to California. Like Warner, he earned his undergraduate degree from Berkeley, but in contrast to Warner's Harvard graduate work, Hollingshead completed his Ph.D. at the University of Nebraska in 1935, in the middle of the Depression.[92]

While Hollingshead's stratification system shared some similarities with Warner's, Hollingshead presented a more sympathetic—and realistic—description of life in the lower classes than did Warner. Where Warner championed the national myth of

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[91] For the American belief in individual determinants of class position, see Stephen J. McNamee and Robert K. Miller Jr., *The Meritocracy Myth* (Lanham, MD: 2004).

[92] Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth*; Grimes, 74; Jerome K. Myers and Robert Straus, "A Sociological Profile of August B. Hollingshead," *Sociological Inquiry* 59, no. 1 (February 1989): 1-6; and Pols.

upward mobility and the "slow but feasible climb upward," Hollingshead outlined systemic barriers to such mobility. He seemed to share the view of one of his informants, a sympathetic businessman, who said, "[t]he working class is made up of good solid people who live right but never get any place."[93] Hollingshead described a socialization process that privileged children from the upper classes and stigmatized children from the lower classes, all while naturalizing the process by defining it as merit-based. Further, he identified structural obstacles to the equality of opportunity underlying the "American creed," noting that individuals in the higher classes were well-positioned to further the broad interests of their own class, while individuals in the lower classes were not, and claiming that "where values associated with the class system run counter to legal requirements … it is not unusual for the law to be tempered to fit the mores of the class system."[94]

Hollingshead outlined certain ideological beliefs that bolstered the class system. He described the circular nature of the relationship between class position and "ability"—since men [sic] with high positions were presumed to have earned them by dint of superior ability, holding a high position was seen as evidence of ability; conversely, a low class position confirmed a lack of ability. Hollingshead also described the effects of what Gramsci would call cultural hegemony: how the elite classes, acting to further their own interests, can persuade the public that the self-interested policies are in everyone's best

[93] Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth*, 71.
[94] Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth*, 449.

interest. He concluded by calling on "idealists" to "change American society so that the ideals embodied in the American creed supplant the ideals of the class system."[95]

Hollingshead drew fire from contemporaries for this deviation from functionalist optimism: as one reviewer phrased it, "this reader feels that the case is made a little too strong for class and its consequences…. Isn't there greater elasticity in our class system than the author implies"?[96] Another reviewer so clearly outlined two perspectives suggested by the idea of "unique experiences as incumbents of class positions" that it is worth quoting him at length:

> From the first point of view, certain persons get the most money, the best jobs and choice houses, while others get what is left. Then the upper-level persons protect their possessions by a variety of means, including mutual co-operation, social exclusion of inferiors, and capture of political institutions. The lower-level persons, barred from the culture of the upper levels, try to climb, fail in this effort, and in their frustration turn to drink, crime, dissipation, and rebelliousness. …
>
> In a contrasting view, the behavior of the persons of the lower levels may be interpreted as the result of lack of experience with the cultures—as in the case of immigrants—or other occupational handicaps which place these populations in circumstances which produce disorganization. The upper and middle levels share in, and maintain, a culture and a social organization which the lowest levels do not fully share. It is erroneous to conceive of the behavior of the lowest level as constituting a separate culture. To the extent that they deviate from the general American culture, these people are disorganized and while in this state are incapable of maintaining any complete social organization.[97]

The reviewer then justified, for a full page and a quarter, his support for the second view, and for his opinion of Hollingshead as naïve, biased, and a poor scientist.

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[95] For the self-justifying nature of class position, see Hollingshead, 451; for his discussion of hegemonic ideology, 450-452; the call to action is outlined on 447-453.

[96] Richard M. Reser, review of *Elmtown's Youth*, by August B., Hollingshead, *Social Forces* 28, no. 2 (December 1949): 211-212; quote on 211.

[97] Robert E. L. Faris, review of *Elmtown's Youth*, by August B. Hollingshead, *The American Journal of Sociology* 56, no. 1 (July 1950): 93-96; quote on 94.

This review was obviously written from the dominant functionalist perspective, which perceives deviant individuals at the root of social problems. However, the review is notable for being able to so clearly articulate another view, one that would soon become known as conflict theory. Conflict theory, addressed more fully later in this chapter, holds that inequalities in the system itself lead to both social problems and individual deviance.

Depression-Era Politicization in Psychology

We saw how sociologists as a discipline ignored the Depression for fear of diluting their professional image as pure, disinterested scientists. However, psychologists handled the 1930s differently. Perhaps because applied psychology had already been partly legitimized in such arenas as industrial-organizational psychology and psychotherapy, psychologists were less reluctant than sociologists to tackle real-world problems. Or perhaps it was simple self-interest; the rapid popularization of psychology during the 1920s, combined with a tendency of many of its popularizers to exaggerate its immediate potential, sparked a backlash in the 1930s. It is also possible that the racier components of the subject simply didn't translate well from the roaring '20s to the austere '30s; the deluge of psychology articles in popular science magazines during the 1920s slowed substantially after the crash. Finally, the discipline felt left out of New Deal public policy; historian Donald Napoli describes a deep professional disappointment when no psychologists were included in President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "brain trust," despite the profession's belief that it was uniquely suited to help the nation cope

with the psychological aspects of the Depression. In addition, when the Science Advisory Board was established in 1934, it also rebuffed psychologists' bid for inclusion.[98]

The Depression did, however, provide the impetus for many psychologists to re-think their discipline's stance on the scientific model, objectivity, applied psychology, and social problems. A number of factors facilitated this reevaluation. First, many psychologists were unemployed in the 1930s, due to the combination of unprecedented numbers of graduates in the 1920s and the sharp drop in available jobs during the Depression. Unemployment can have a radicalizing effect, as it did when a group of mostly master's level psychologists in New York City met in 1935 to talk about the unemployment situation and formed the Psychologists League. The League engaged in both practical action, such as lobbying for more federal jobs in psychology, and in social and political critiques of psychology and psychoanalytic theory. However, the youth of most members, the group's avowed Marxist orientation, and its unsuccessful focus on expanding government-funded jobs in psychology kept it from having much impact on the profession as a whole.[99]

But another Depression-era psychological group did have an impact. In 1936, two young psychologists, frustrated by their discipline's apolitical stance and refusal to address social problems in the midst of the country's crisis, and frustrated too by the lack of employment for new professionals, wrote to like-minded psychologists to gauge

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[98] On psychology's declining appeal and in the 1930s, see Ward, 150-152, and Napoli, chapter 4.
[99] Lorenz J. Finison, "Unemployment, Politics, and the History of Organized Psychology II," *American Psychologist* 33, no. 5 (1978): 471-477; and Bertha Garrett Holliday and Angela L. Holmes, "A Tale of Challenge and Change: A History and Chronology of Ethnic Minorities in Psychology in the United

interest in forming an organization to address those frustrations. The interest was there, and the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues was organized that fall with more than 400 members. While it certainly drew its share of fire—some of the psychologists who had received the introductory letter accused the organizers of "'pink' or darker" shades of thought, and others were appalled at what they saw as the retreat from pure science—the SPSSI managed to not only survive, but to establish a (contested) legitimacy for applying psychology to social problems.[100]

As early as 1938, SPSSI members brought psychological theory to bear on labor relations and differences in "attitudes" among different social classes. Industrial conflict became a major topic for members, as did desegregation, racism, and militarism. Though controversial, these topics dovetailed with a broader shift in interwar psychology toward "environmentalism," or the impact of the individuals' environments on their development and functioning. Because of that shift, and because of psychology's more obvious utility as an applied, rather than a "pure," science, the SPSSI was not marginalized. It was an official affiliate of the American Psychological Association from 1937 on, and 1945, it also became Division 9 of the APA, continuing, in one founder's words, to "nudge" the APA toward a social conscience.[101]

States," in *Handbook of Racial & Ethnic Minority Psychology,* ed. Guillermo Bernal, Joseph E. Trimble, and Frederick T. Leong (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003), 23.

[100] Ludy T. Benjamin, *A History of Psychology in Letters,* 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 184-196. The charge of being "'pink' or darker" came from University of Texas psychologist F. J. Adam, and is quoted on 190.

[101] For the shift to environmentalism, see Jansz and van Drunen, 180-183; for early SPSSI work, see David Krech and Dorwin Cartwright, "On SPSSI's First 20 Years," *American Psychologist* 11 (1956): 470-473, and Lorenz J. Finison, "An Aspect of the Early History of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues: Psychologists and Labor," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 15 (1979): 29-37.

World War II and the "Age of Psychology"

A number of historians have detailed the dramatic changes in the scope, stature, and public awareness of psychology during and after World War II.[102] The military, after its small-scale and ambivalent use of psychologists in World War I, ardently recruited psychologists for testing, personnel administration, propaganda, morale work, mental health issues, and therapy. Government research funding extended into the Cold War and assured the growth of the discipline, just as psychological ideas were being popularized on a far broader scale than had occurred in the 1920s. Psychological concepts and advisors extended their influence into the military, public policy, education, the criminal justice system, child rearing, relationship management, and everyday life. In the words of one historian, psychology became a "mammoth technoscientific profession."[103]

This boom-town excitement was pervasive in psychological circles when Hollingshead and Redlich drafted their study of psychology and social class. As early as 1913, a German researcher had noticed that schizophrenics were disproportionately members of the lower part of the socioeconomic spectrum, while neurotics were disproportionately from more privileged strata. The topic received a smattering of attention into the 1940s, with most efforts aimed at confirming the pattern, particularly for the schizophrenics, in different geographical and clinical locations.[104] In the 1940s,

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[102] See Herman, Moscowitz, and James H. Capshew, *Psychologists on the March: Science, Practice, and Professional Identity in America, 1929-1969* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
[103] Capshew, 1. Also see Herman and Moskowitz.
[104] Ludwig Stern, *Kulturkreis und Form der geistigen Erkrankung* (Halle: Carl Marhold, 1913), cited in Christopher Tietze, Paul Lemkau, and Marcia Cooper, "Schizophrenia, Manic Depressive Psychosis and Social-Economic Status," *American Journal of Sociology* 47, no. 2 (September 1941): 167-175; citation on 169.

however, sociologists entered the conversation. Rather than simply confirming statistical incidence, the sociologists' focus shifted to causality. The burning question became whether schizophrenia was the result of nature or nurture: was it part of a package of inferior heredity that kept afflicted individuals from succeeding at life, as the "social selection" theory held; did mental illness result in an individual's downward mobility, as posited by the downward drift theory; or did a low socioeconomic position create stressors that spawned schizophrenia?

The sociological opinion leaned toward social selection. The concept illustrates the way that functionalism implicitly supports the status quo by making class stratification seem both natural ("natural" in two senses: that it is inevitable, and that the stratification process is not seen as being socially constructed to benefit one group over other) and reasonable. For example, note the lack of agency in one 1959 definition of social selection: "the manner in which a given social system functions through time and in its functioning tends to sort and sift persons into class and community positions."[105] This understanding of stratification naturalizes the process, obscures the constructed nature of the social system, along with its beneficiaries, and implies that the "sorting and sifting" makes objective sense.

And it was typically—though not always—with this understanding of the stratification process that both sociologists and psychologists turned to the puzzling problem of class differences in the ostensibly classless postwar period. For example, in

1966, discussing the results of his NIMH-funded research on "Social Status and Psychological Disorder" in the *American Sociological Review*, sociologist Bruce Dohrenwend discounted the idea that a marginalized class position may have produced mental disorder, stating "It is also possible, and somehow more readily credible, however, that a genetic or biochemical factor initially caused the disorder." He made this claim because he found it "hard to think of an alternative social factor."[106] His statement betrayed his functionalist perspective, naturalized the idea of "mental disorder" as an ahistoric, absolute state rather than a culturally defined one, and indicated a lack of perception about the stresses and impacts of marginalized social conditions.

His perspective was not atypical: as more work confirmed the class-based differences in psychology, more researchers insisted that those differences were, variously, inevitable, understandable, and not necessarily worth worrying about. In 1954, another psychiatrist/sociologist team acknowledged what was by then a commonly held view about middle- and upper-middle-class therapists working with patients from lower classes "Differences in value systems and patterns of communication…may hamper the establishment of the therapeutic relationship." The authors were not optimistic about possible solutions: "[I]t appears possible that lower-class patients need to acquire new symbols and values to participate in expressive psychotherapy. Since this is a difficult process, many of them may be considered unpromising candidates for successful

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[105] H. Warren Dunham, "Social Structures and Mental Disorders: Competing Hypotheses of Explanation" in *Causes of Mental Disorders: A Review of the Epidemiological Knowledge: 1959, Proceedings*, ed. Millbank Memorial Fund (New York: Millbank Memorial Fund, 1961), 255.

[106] Bruce P. Dohrenwend, "Social Status and Psychological Disorder: An Issue of Substance and an Issue of Method," *American Sociological Review* 31, no. 1 (February 1966): 14-34, quote on 15.

treatment."[107] The authors added that "perhaps psychiatrists need to acquire new symbols and values in dealing with lower-class patients; or perhaps new approaches are necessary to bring psychotherapy to such persons." However, compared to the insight displayed by a very few of their contemporaries, the last sentence seems tacked on and mechanical.

Quantitative Sociology and Its Impact on Class Theory

Both psychologists and sociologists were undertaking studies into the relationship between psychology and class, but both groups looked to sociological work for their basic understanding of class and its structures. I have noted how American sociologists' functionalist perspective shaped their views of class. Similarly, a quantitative shift in postwar sociology resulted in a mechanistic, superficial view of class that influenced psychological thought as well. In their continuing quest for positivist credibility, postwar sociologists dove headlong into the country's popular love affair with science. While we see some early emphasis on quantitative research in the community studies, for example in Warner's elaborate, mathematically ranked status scale, the quantitative turn in the immediate postwar period is a significant departure from earlier work, both in the amount of quantitative data and in its focus.

Quantitative sociological methods, particularly attitude surveys and statistical sampling, had been well financed and widely used during wartime research. This increased funding, combined with the accompanying sense of patriotic importance and the excitement generated by ever-more-precise quantitative methods, must have been

[107] Myers and Schaffer, "Social Stratification and Psychiatric Practice," 310.

very compelling for practitioners of the "littlest science." As a recent historian phrased it, they "forged a scientific identity that could legitimate sociology as a distinct realm of professional competence and cumulative knowledge," the Holy Grail of sociologists since Comte.[108] However, this reification of numerical data further obscured the forest by so minutely examining the trees. Moreover, the misplaced focus was particularly problematic in the realm of class, since grasping the many economic, social, and cultural factors that perpetuate the class structure—and maintain its invisibility—requires a macro, not a micro, view.

As part of their efforts to position their discipline as a scientific one, most mid-century sociologists self-consciously constructed a value-neutral stance towards their work. Putting as much distance as possible between themselves and the amateur reformist sociologists of the Progressive era, they insisted on rigorously objective research. To combat residual traces of the profession's reform heritage, which continued to color popular (and policymaker) perceptions of sociology, sociologists in the 1940s and 1950s examined social phenomena with quantitative precision, but stopped far short of analyses that could be interpreted as evaluation or recommendation. The hope was that this demonstration of scientific detachment would further buttress sociologists' claims that theirs was a true science.[109]

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[108] Arthur Mazur published "The Littlest Science" in *American Sociologist* 3 (1968): 195-200. For the quote, see David Paul Haney, *The Americanization of Social Science: Intellectuals and Public Responsibility in the Postwar United States* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), 8.

[109] For discussion of value neutrality in postwar sociology, see Haney, chapters 2 and 3, and Friedrichs, chapter 4. For a thorough analysis of the clash between value neutral and "purposive" social science work in the 1920s and 1930s, see Smith, *Social Science in the Crucible*.

However, an unintended consequence of this intense pursuit of neutrality seems to have been a general retreat from the pressing social problems of the day in favor of less controversial topics. One major example of this disciplinary distaste for relevant social issues has been documented: after the Supreme Court mandated school desegregation in 1954's Brown v. Board of Education, sociological work on race declined to its lowest rate in years. Robert Friedrichs, in his *Sociology of Sociology*, described the phenomenon as sociologists "turning their backs on critical questions of social disorganization and seeking islands of non-involvement," all in pursuit of credibility as empirical scientists. This version of scientificism seems incompatible with analysis of any serious social problems, particularly one as slippery and multifaceted as class.[110]

Despite the convolutions undertaken by the discipline to appear scientific, the public opinion of sociology was still mixed, inspiring even greater strides toward quantitative credibility. During hearings for the establishment of a National Science Foundation, which sociologists very much wanted to be part of, some congressmen's comments ranged to "the danger of crackpots," "men addicted to isms," and "wild-eyed so-called research," all reflections of the old reformist stereotype that postwar sociologists fought so hard to overcome.[111] Quantitative sociology seemed tailor-made for countering that stereotype. Other factors that privileged quantitative methods included the general postwar infatuation with science and sociology's longstanding empiricist

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[110] Friedrichs, 79-83; quote on 83.

[111] For discussion of debates about the creation of the National Science Foundation, see Haney, chapter 2. For the senators' comments, see George A. Lundberg, "The Senate Ponders Social Science," *The Scientific Monthly* 64, no. 5 (May 1947): 397-411.

aspirations. In addition, recent improvements in sampling theory allowed smaller, less expensive surveys to be conducted, increasing the popularity of this analysis further.

Unfortunately, the widespread enthusiasm for quantitative work tended to facilitate "bean counting" over analysis of social mechanisms, and with a topic as complex as social class, bean counting tends to distract rather than enlighten. As this type of quick and easy research spread, and it spread exponentially, results "were often clouded by later research that showed differences within the differences, plausible alternatives, and differences between subpopulations with respect to the differences."[112] In other words, the studies eventually were done for the sake of a study, not to investigate a substantial theory. While there was some protest from contemporary critics, such as Brown University sociologist Dennis Wrong, who described the phenomenon as "obsessive methodolatry," most sociologists—and certainly most prominent sociologists—embraced sophisticated quantitative methods. [113]

One important effect of this shift was that, rather than examining how class positions impacted people's lives, as the Lynds and Hollingshead had, postwar sociological investigations of class instead measured various components of class position. Elaborate numerical systems were developed to pinpoint the precise socioeconomic status of one's living room furniture; a flurry of separate studies measured occupational prestige.[114] Path analysis in particular allowed sociologists to produce an

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[112] Turner and Turner, 117.
[113] Dennis Wrong, "The Failure of Sociology," *Commentary* 28 (November 1959): 375-380; quote on 376.
[114] The "living-room scale" is described in Reissman, 117-125; for occupational prestige studies, see Grimes, 110-121.

unprecedentedly detailed description of *The American Occupational Structure* in 1967. But despite its precise analyses and its enthusiastic reception, the work exemplifies how postwar sociology's quantitative focus misdirected attention away from the broader cultural issues. Lewis Coser described the phenomenon in his 1975 presidential address to the American Sociological Association. Citing the 1967 publication on occupational structure, he argued that

> [T]his research contributes to the understanding of the *distributive,* not to the *relational* aspects of social class. … There is no concern here with the ways in which differential class power and social advantage operate in predictable and routine ways, through specifiable social interactions between classes or interest groups, to give shape to determinate social structures and to create differential life chances.[115]

Coser argued that the emphasis on quantitative research, by ignoring how class actually functioned in society, delegitimized the function of class as an object of inquiry. While quantitative analysis necessarily focuses on visible and quantifiable aspects of a situation, the mechanisms of class are hidden. Coser's point was that as sociologists developed models of investigation for the quantifiable aspects of class, they lost sight of what class meant for classed people, leading to a situation in which "the methodological tail wags the substantive dog."[116]

Dissent and the Emergence of Conflict Theory

While the vast majority of sociologists embraced the functionalist, quantitative, "value neutral" sociology dominant in the postwar period, there were exceptions. In

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[115] Lewis A. Coser, "Presidential Address: Two Methods in Search of a Substance," *American Sociological Review* 40, no. 6 (December 1975): 691-700; quote on 694.
[116] Ibid., 692.

1951, one small group of sociologists, frustrated with their field's increasing disengagement with social problems and humanism, as well as what they perceived as its institutional elitism and cronyism, founded an organization that they hoped would offer a more socially engaged alternative to the dominant American Sociological Society. They established the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP), loosely modeled on the older Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, with which some of them had been involved.

The SSSP rejected both what members saw as an overemphasis on quantitative research in sociology and the belief that such research was value neutral; no research methodology, they insisted, guaranteed freedom from researcher bias, funding considerations, or other influences. For its first decade and a half, critiques of mainstream sociology's value neutrality and quantitative focus were central to the SSSP. One SSSP founder claimed that the scientific aura of quantitative methods was often used simply to lure potential clients: in his words, "The hard nose sociologist is often the brown nose sociologist." More disturbingly, many early SSSP members were alarmed at the profession's expanding role in the military, government, and business, where sociological work was increasingly used to "manage" workers, consumers, and citizens, to justify the status quo, and to support and naturalize existing power structures. However, the American Sociological Association and mainstream sociologists denounced the SSSP in its early years, claiming that the new group was divisive, unprofessional, and biased.[117]

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[117] For the development of SSSP, see Jessie Bernard, "My Four Revolutions: An Autobiographical History of the ASA," *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 4 (January 1973): 773-791; Elizabeth Briant Lee and

Around the same period, other fissures appeared in the hegemonic facade of the field. In 1954, C. Wright Mills produced a very public critique of his discipline in an essay for the *Saturday Review of Literature*. He accused his colleagues of unnecessarily dense and pretentious jargon; of a disproportionate focus on scientism and quantification that trivialized the field; and of large-scale administrative research that facilitated bureaucratic functioning at the expense of intellectual analysis. He developed the same themes more fully in his 1959 *The Sociological Imagination*, which additionally bemoaned the inherent conservatism of the functionalist perspective.[118]

More to the point for our purposes, Mills had become a keen observer of the American class system, and had rejected the dominant functionalist perspective that explained subordinated class positions as the result of individual deviance, inadequacy, or social disorganization. He explored the growth of organized labor in *The New Men of Power*, describing labor's cooptation in what later came to be called "business unionism" well ahead of other social theorists. He analyzed the dramatic growth of the middle class in *White Collar*, noting its passivity and alienation in the face of bureaucratization, and also pointing out management's increasing (and increasingly successful) use of psychological coercion with its workforce. He argued that "with rising material standards, exploitation becomes less material and more psychological," using both a language ("exploitation") and perspective on power much more common to Marxian

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Alfred McClung Lee, "The Society for the Study of Social Problems: Parental Recollections and Hopes," *Social Problems* 24, no. 1 (October 1976): 4-14; Charles H. Page, "Young Turks in Sociology: Yesterday and Today," *Sociological Forum* 1, no. 1 (Winter, 1986): 158-168; and Barry Skura, "Constraints on a Reform Movement: Relationships between SSSP and ASA, 1951-1970," *Social Problems* 24, no. 1 (October 1976): 15-36. Quote from Alfred McClung Lee, cited in Skura, 19.

[118] Mills, "IBM Plus Reality Plus Humanism = Sociology," *Saturday Review of Literature* (May 1, 1954): 22-23, 54; Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959).

analysis than to 1951 American sociology, an indication of his distance from mainstream professional thought. Finally, Mills' 1956 *The Power Elite* challenged the popular belief in American classlessness by delineating the ways in which military, political, and economic leaders maintained their own class interests.[119]

However, while Mills' observations foreshadowed the directions that critical theorists would later take, his work did not have a broad impact on sociology during his lifetime. Mills was a sociological outsider during most of his career, and was perceived by colleagues as combative and unpolished. While he is cited as an important theorist in today's sociological texts, his colleagues did not, for the most part, share that view. A 1961 article in the *British Journal of Sociology* noted Mills' status as an "intellectual hero" to politically conscious young Brits, but added, "It must be reported, however, that he has little importance for contemporary American sociology." Another indication of Mills' marginality is that introductory sociology textbooks did not portray his work as central to modern sociological thought until the mid-1970s.[120]

But disciplinary critiques by marginalized figures did not challenge the core of sociology's hegemonic function. That core was functionalism, and it was through the functionalist worldview that sociology endorsed the inherence, and inherent goodness, of the current class structure. In 1956, Lewis Coser took aim at that core when he published

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[119] For the development of Mills' view of class, see Horowitz, especially chapter 4. Mills and Helen Schneider, *The New Men of Power: America's Labor Leaders* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1948); Mills, *White Collar: The American Middle Classes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951); quote on 110; Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

[120] For Mills' marginalization in the field, see Haney, especially 137-171, and Horowitz, especially chapter 5; Seymour Martin Lipset and Neil Smelser, "Change and Controversy in Recent American Sociology," *The British Journal of Sociology* 12, no. 1 (March 1961): 41-51, quote on 50. For Mills' inclusion in

The Function of Social Conflict, arguing that the functionalist view of conflict—that conflict is dysfunctional and that is should be (and could be) minimized or eliminated—was misguided. He pointed out both the inevitability of social conflict and its positive social functions. Reviews were generally favorable, although only one seemed to foreshadow the significance of Coser's impact on the field: the reviewer for *The British Journal of Sociology* introduced his comments by indicting the American belief "in a millennial society where harmonious integration will have dispensed with social struggle." Western Europeans, on the other hand, "know better," and the reviewer's highest praise for Coser was that his perspective was a European one. In retrospect, one main strength of Coser's work was indeed that he had managed to free his vision from the functionalist hegemony of mid-century American sociology.[121]

Despite the book's positive reviews, it did not achieve its position in the sociological canon until the cultural upheavals of the 1960s. In the midst of the civil rights movement, student activism, and anti-war protests, Coser's thesis seemed to be a more compelling explanation of social behavior than functionalist harmony was. *The Functions of Social Conflict* is credited with paving the way for the development of conflict theory, whose emphasis on inequitable allocations of power and other scarce

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sociology texts, see Alan Wells, "Conflict Theory and Functionalism: Introductory Sociology Textbooks, 1928-1976," *Teaching Sociology* 6, no. 4 (July 1979): 429-437, particularly 433-434.

[121] Lewis A. Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1956); Maurice Freedman, review of *The Functions of Social Conflict,* by Lewis Coser, *The British Journal of Sociology* 10, no. 2 (June 1959): 167-168.

resources in societies provided sociologists with the theoretical tools they needed to investigate class issues in more substantial ways.[122]

German theorist Ralf Dahrendorf added psychology to conflict theory in his 1958 essay, "Out of Utopia: Toward a Reorientation of Sociological Analysis," which lambasted American sociologists for both the utopian and conservative nature of their functionalism. He also noted that, in order for the functionalist model to cohere, any disturbance to the harmonious equilibrium of society must be blamed on a psychologically malfunctioning individual. The following year, Dahrendorf's *Class and Class Conflict in an Industrial Society* was published in English. As the title indicates, Dahrendorf argued, as had Marx, that social conflict based on class position was inevitable. However, where Marx had defined classes based on ownership of the means of production, Dahrendorf saw power, not property, as the dividing line. He described two opposing class positions, one whose members had authority over subordinates, and one whose members obeyed the authority of others.[123]

While these challenges to functionalism ended its unquestioned hegemony, their impact was marginal at first, and gained acceptance only slowly. Mainstream sociologists initially perceived the critiques as the views of crackpots and malcontents. From this perspective, the SSSP was radical and unprofessional, and Mills was a fringe character. Into the mid-1960s, the dominant sociological paradigm clearly reflected the

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[122] Lewis Coser, "This Week's Citation Classic," *Citation Classics* 43 (26 October 1987). Online: <garfield.library.upenn.edu/classics1987/A1987K386000001.pdf>; Sharon Erickson Nepstad, "The Continuing Relevance of Coser's Theory of Conflict," *Sociological Forum* 20, no. 2 (June 2005): 335-337.

conservative, functionalist view, and continued to endorse the American class system as beneficial to all.

Anomie

In 1949, Harvard sociologist Robert K. Merton resuscitated Emile Durkheim's word "anomie" to describe a particular class-based phenomenon.[124] For Merton, anomie was the condition that resulted when certain groups in a culture lacked access to legitimate means to attain the dominant cultural goal, which Merton described in the United States as the accumulation of wealth. As he explained it,

> [O]ur egalitarian society denies by implication the existence of noncompeting groups and individuals in the pursuit of pecuniary success. The same body of success-symbols is held to be desirable for all. These goals are held to *transcend class lines,* not to be bounded by them, yet the actual social organization is such that there exist class differentials in the accessibility of these *common* access-symbols. Frustration and thwarted aspiration lead to the avenues of escape from a culturally induced intolerable situation; or unrelieved ambition may eventuate in illicit attempts to acquire the dominant values.[125] [Italics in original.]

Merton's insight was important: he pointed out that, while the dominant classes assume that all other classes want to obtain "success" as defined in dominant class terms, subordinate classes do not have the same levels of access to the signifiers of that success as the higher classes do. The responses to subordinated class members' frustrated acquisition are either "escape" from the pursuit, or the employment of culturally unacceptable means to acquire the desired cultural symbols. In short, the unequal access

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[123] Ralf Dahrendorf, "Out of Utopia: Toward a Reorientation of Sociological Analysis," *The American Journal of Sociology* 64, no. 2 (September 1958): 115-127; Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959).

[124] Durkheim's use of "anomie" referred instead to the "normlessness" and alienation of mass society. See Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*.

to these symbols, combined with the insistence that everyone should desire them, leads to deviance.

Further, Merton acknowledged that the culture was more classed than its rhetoric implied, admitting that "despite our persisting open-class ideology," financial success was rare for those with limited educational and economic opportunities. And in a footnote, Merton discussed the possibility that the American class structure was becoming more rigid, and that social mobility was declining.[126] Merton's work made anomie one of the most high-profile concepts in the field during the 1950s and 1960s. However, most of the postwar work on the topic focused not on the inequitable access to legitimate avenues of wealth, but on the deviance of the individual, and as well as his (and it was always "his") alienation in mass society. In fact, the concept of anomie provided a useful alternative to "alienation," which carried a problematic Marxist association.[127]

This functionalist perspective of individual deficiency dovetailed nicely with psychology's increasingly persuasive view of the individual psyche as the locus of all problems. Historian David Haney demonstrates how, in their attempt to develop quantitative measures of anomie, sociologists ended up focusing on the phenomenon's individual, psychological manifestations rather than its broader social functions. Leo Srole codified the shift in 1956 by introducing the concept of "anomia," or individual

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[125] Robert K. Merton, "Social Structure and Anomie," *American Sociological Review* 3, no. 5 (October 1938): 672-682; quote on 680.
[126] Merton, 679. While Merton remained a functionalist, he did incorporate the concept of differential power into functionalism. He also argued in later work that functionalism was not necessarily conservative.
[127] Mathieu Deflem, "Anomie," in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology,* ed. George Ritzer (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 144-146.

anomie. Anomie, properly understood, required a complex, macro view of society; anomia, on the other hand, could be easily investigated with a sample survey. In the postwar era, more than a thousand sociological studies investigated individuals' levels of alienation; correlated anomia with hostility towards minorities; compared levels of anomia in Protestants and Catholics; and explored anomia levels in relation to deviance, criminality, suicide, voting patterns, and media preferences. However, in the onslaught of statistical material, a broader cultural analysis of inequality was lost.[128]

Psychology and Class

So, with the narrow and quantitative sociological approach to class as their model, psychologists continued to investigate the puzzling class-based differences in mental illness and health. Propelled by both the upsurge of attention to class variables in psychology and by what seemed to be an ever-increasing NIMH research budget, studies proliferated. A few scattered publications had interrogated class and psychology between 1938 and 1941, with a hiatus in the war years. But after the war, class became a constant (though still minor) topic in psychological publications. The relationship between schizophrenia and class variables continued to be a popular topic of research, though the definitions of those variables remained clunky and undertheorized. For example, one study addressed "Psychoses, Income, and Occupational Prestige," components of class that are easy to quantify but which, narrowly focused as they are, do not facilitate broader explanatory hypotheses about the nature of the social system and its inequalities.[129] Other

[128] Haney, pp. 71-87; Leo Srole, "Social Integration and Certain Corollaries: An Exploratory Study," *American Sociological Review* 21, no. 6 (December 1956): 710-111.
[129] Clark, 443.

studies correlated class with attitudes towards therapists, rates of treatment, types of treatment, drop-out rates, length of therapy, experience levels of assigned therapists, psychosomatic symptoms, and responses to various psychological tests.

But, as had happened in sociology, a great deal of the research began to seem simplistic, mechanical, and repetitive. By 1975, an NIMH report could note that at least 50 studies had confirmed the higher prevalence of schizophrenia in the lower classes. And the studies found (and confirmed) differences, but without attempting to understand why those differences existed or what they meant. In 1950, an emerging leader in the field, social psychologist Richard Centers, pointed out that the expanding body of work in the field rarely exceeded simple description and correlation. Further, even professionals in the discipline lacked a working vocabulary for the phenomenon of class. He complained, "A particular conceptual difficulty in most of this research is the lack of adequate differentiation among such concepts as stratification, status and class. These terms are generally used interchangeably and with a breadth of reference that renders them confusingly vague."[130]

And, from our modern vantage point, they were. Centers had been raised in poverty and had been a migrant laborer before earning his Ph.D. in psychology. He was, as a result, unusually perceptive about the inaccuracies of middle-class mythology, and wrote his doctoral dissertation on class consciousness. That work, published in 1949 as *The Psychology of Social Classes: A Study of Class Consciousness*, is still cited by class

[130] Richard Centers, "Four Studies in Psychology and Social Status: A Special Review," *Psychological Bulletin* 47, no. 3 (May 1950): 263-271; quote on 271.

theorists today. Center was the first American researcher to object to traditional "upper, middle, and low" options for individuals' self-rankings of class. When he added the category of "working class," the majority of respondents chose it. But despite Centers' heightened sensitivity to class divisions and affiliations, even he lacked a satisfactory theoretical model for his observations. "Class" implies structural allocations of power and privilege. Both power and privilege on the one hand, and marginalization and disempowerment on the other, are, by virtue of class position, unearned. Further, the relationship between the powerful and the disempowered is exploitive. But Centers, along with the vast majority of postwar professionals, had no access to that theoretical understanding. It had been branded as "Marxist," and was thus academically and politically disreputable.[131]

However, despite the theoretical void, a handful of class researchers did manage to see beyond their own socialization, and to challenge dominant perceptions and explanations of class differences. Some were adept at employing what Mills had called the "sociological imagination," and appreciating how social, political, and economic forces impacted individuals' lives and behaviors. New research worked to identify differences in working-class and middle-class values, perceptions, and communication styles, not in an attempt to "blame the victim," as the culture of poverty theory would later be appropriated to do, but in an attempt to understand and possibly bridge

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[131] Richard Centers, *The Psychology of Social Classes: A Study of Class Consciousness* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1949). For biographical information, see "Richard Truman Centers, Psychology: Los Angeles," University of California web site. Online: <http://content.cdlib.org/view?docId=hb4d5nb20m&doc.view=frames&chunk.id=div00029&toc.depth=1&toc.id=&brand=calisphere>.

differences. And, in that moment of postwar optimism, in the midst of unprecedented national affluence and world influence, and during a dizzying expansion of psychology's professional prestige, that bridge seemed possible.

Conclusions

Postwar psychological practitioners' views of class differences were influenced by the widespread cultural belief in a classless society, as well as the individualistic belief in meritocracy. These cultural assumptions were reinforced by psychologists' reliance on sociological constructions of class. American sociologists have, for a number of reasons, tended toward more conservative views than their European counterparts. Their early desire to differentiate themselves from reformers, the American antipathy to Marxism, early American universities' conservatism and aversion to controversy, the theoretical dominance of functionalism, and the postwar ascendance of quantitative sociology all combined to naturalize the American class system and downplay structural inequalities. Further, twentieth-century developments in psychology itself fostered similar views of class relationships. The development of intelligence testing evaluated people on a hierarchical scale and privileged those in the educated classes, and the field of eugenics provided "scientific" justification for elitism and racism.

However, despite the pervasiveness of middle-class bias in psychology, a small number of researchers and practitioners recognized and challenged this class normativity. Beginning with Kingsley Davis' 1938 acknowledgement of mental hygiene's middle-class values, observers have described and, at times, attempted to combat psychology's classed orientation. The next chapter investigates the development of industrial

psychology, arguing that here again, for a number of reasons, American practitioners aligned themselves with management. This pro-management perspective worked to naturalize middle-class worldviews while fostering professional skepticism towards the claims and perspectives of labor. Here too, though, challenges to the dominant perspective existed; chapter two also examines a labor-sponsored program whose goal was to retrofit psychology for workers.

Chapter Two. Industrial-Organizational Psychology and the National Institute for Labor Education Mental Health Program: A Case Study.

In the wake of the massive postwar strike wave, the popular American bi-weekly *Science News Letter* introduced an article with the headline, "Strikes Are Preventable." The text began, "Psychologists and sociologists could help industry prevent strikes like the present work stoppage in the steel and coal industries. They have the necessary 'know-how' to cure friction."[1] The article then proceeded to explain that mediating labor conflict is similar to marriage counseling, listing mediation strategies one by one. However, one by one, the description of each strategy ended with an explanation of its ineffectiveness in labor disputes. For example, in the first suggested technique, non-directive counseling, the therapist never suggests solutions, but guides the participants into talking through their own options to arrive at an agreement. Unfortunately, the author acknowledges, in an industrial dispute, "one or both sides may lack any desire to arrive at a settlement." The second technique allows the therapist to suggest strategies for the participants to experiment with. However, the author admits, "[t]his technique also works better in reconciling married partners than in industrial associates."[2]

This news snippet hints at both the pro-management perspective adopted by American industrial-organizational (IO) psychologists, and also at the conceptual failure of postwar IO psychology: its insistence on assuming that labor and management had

[1] "Strikes Are Preventable," *Science News Letter* 56, no. 18 (29 October 1949), 227-228; headline and quote on 227.
[2] Ibid.

similar, rather than competing, interests. After World War II, psychology exploded as a profession. The military, the government, and industry suddenly courted psychological opinions; funding for professional training and research skyrocketed, as did the numbers of professionals; and psychological ideas and language inundated the popular American consciousness. Amid the many permutations of psychological ideas, practices, and subdisciplines, one field in particular—IO psychology—had the potential to more fully investigate class issues. It was, by the postwar period, a well-established discipline. However, a number of factors constrained its ability to shed light on class.

This chapter traces the development of industrial psychology in the United States, describing the forces and attitudes that shaped its practitioners' perspectives, as well as the way that labor perceived those perspectives. While a few early IO pioneers made efforts to examine workplace relations from neutral perspectives, the bulk of the field rapidly aligned itself with management, often using the tools of psychology against workers in repressive or manipulative ways. In addition, most industrial workers only came into contact with psychological professionals at the workplace, since individual therapy was a pursuit of the middle and elite classes. As a result, industrial workers developed a mistrust of psychology that was based on their experiences with IO professionals.

I also examine a small and all-but-forgotten mental health research program, a collaboration of union leaders and university-based industrial psychology researchers that, quite progressively for its time, challenged the middle-class bias of the psychological profession. It did not succeed, but provides modern observers with a

fascinating example of the pervasiveness of middle-class psychological normativity, the attempts to challenge that normativity, and the ways in which those challenges were deflected.

Psychology's Popularity in the 1950s

The military had funded psychological studies during World War II and had given psychological professionals unprecedented input into public policy, input that continued into peacetime. Wartime psychologists had been heavily involved in personnel testing, classification, and training, as well as work in adjustment and morale. The influx of psychological ideas and professionals was so pervasive in the military that at war's end, the navy's representative on the National Defense Research Committee would claim that "the application of psychology in selecting and training men, and in guiding the design of weapons so they would fit men, did more to help win this war than any other single intellectual activity.'[3]

In 1946, Congress passed the National Mental Health Act and established the National Institute of Mental Health. Increased funding for both psychological training and research produced a surge of new psychological professionals: the number of psychiatrists in the country more than quintupled between World War II and the mid-1960s; the number of clinical psychologists in the American Psychological Association almost tripled between 1948 and 1960, while the tally of counseling psychologists doubled. And although less than 4 percent of the American population had used

[3] For discussion of psychology's role with the military, see Herman, Capshew, and Napoli. Quote from Lybrand Palmer Smith, foreword to Charles W. Bray, *Psychology and Military Efficiency* (Princeton:

psychological services at the start of World War II, by the mid-1950s 14 percent had.[4]

But this dramatic expansion of psychology wasn't just top-down, government-fostered phenomenon; a number of factors converged to create the boom. The alienation of postwar society, the isolation of the new suburbs, and the stresses of 1950s conformity all combined to create fertile ground for new ways of understanding the subjective interior. Additionally, the public needed psychology in the postwar period, or needed something like it, to try to cope with the disturbing aftermath of concentration camps and nuclear devastation as well as with the unsettling impersonality and mechanization of postwar America. Against this backdrop, and seemingly overnight, average people were engrossed by the recently obscure discipline of psychology; the id and the ego became dinner table conversation, along with "complexes," "neuroses," and "repression." Psychological ideas and jargon spread into the far reaches of popular culture: newspapers, magazines, self-help books, radio, television, films, and novels were rife with the new psychological themes. *Life* magazine captured the mood in its 1957 series "The Age of Psychology."[5]

Organized Labor and Psychology

The leaders of organized labor shared the national infatuation with psychology in the postwar period. There were compelling reasons for labor leaders' interest: with the

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Princeton University Press, 1948), v., quoted in Napoli, 105.

[4] For increase in APA specialties, see Wade Pickren, "Tension and Opportunity in Post-World War II American Psychology," *History of Psychology* 10, no. 3 (2007): 279-299, increase on 286-287. For percentage of Americans using psychological services, see Abma, 111.

[5] For discussion of psychology's role with the military and government, see Herman. Havemann, "The Age of Psychology," *Life* (7 January-4 February 1957).

popularization and growth of psychology, access to mental health care was, for the first time, put on the union bargaining table. In 1946, the medical care provider for Teamsters Local 688, an entity called the St. Louis Labor Health Institute, added limited psychiatric services to the local's health care services. The program relied on social workers as therapists, encouraged patients to "vent," distributed psychotropic drugs, and administered electroshock therapy. Despite the limited nature of the services, the simple fact of their inclusion in the local's medical services is significant.[6]

In addition to the nascent idea of providing mental health services for workers, labor leaders were also concerned by recent studies, including Hollingshead and Redlich's New Haven study, indicating that non-middle-class patients experienced both mental illness and its treatment differently—and, in the case of treatment, less successfully—than middle-class patients did. The reports suggested that poorer patients tended to see their problems as physical rather than psychological or even interpersonal; in fact, they often entered the mental health system after presenting a psychosomatic or somatic complaint to a physician. Additionally, both patients and their families and friends from the lower socioeconomic strata generally saw mental illness as stigmatizing, and as a condition that required involuntary institutionalization. Finally, these patients generally expected the psychological professional to take an authoritarian and directive

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[6] Helen H. Avnet, *Psychiatric Insurance; Financing Short-Term Ambulatory Treatment* (New York: GHI-APA-NAMH Psychiatric Research Project, 1962), and Louis L. Tureen and Morris Wortman, "A Program for Treatment and Prevention of Psychiatric Conditions Sponsored by a Labor Union," paper presented at the American Orthopsychiatric Association Convention, March 1964, Box 34 File: St. Louis Labor Health Institute, NILER.

approach, seemed frustrated when their expectations were unmet, and were unable or unwilling to engage in traditional analytical talk therapy.[7]

Postwar Perceptions and Vocabularies of Class

These findings, as one might imagine given the egalitarian rhetoric and class denial so prevalent in the culture, sparked enormous concern. Of perhaps more interest to modern-day observers, with the benefit of an additional half-century of both psychological and class studies, is the way in which these investigations were framed. The language used to describe patients typically divided them into two categories: middle class and "lower" class. A small minority of researchers did, to their credit, choose other language: a few relied on Hollingshead's typology, some, especially in the later 1950s, used designations of blue- and white-collar, and at least one apologized for, but still used, "lower" class. Language is a powerful shaper of perceptions, and the decision of most researchers to call their non-middle-class subjects lower class instead of using a term with a less negative connotation is, at best, unsympathetic.

Additionally, this linguistic choice was unlikely to have simply been born of ignorance. In 1949, social psychologist Richard Centers, skeptical of a *Fortune* magazine report that almost 80% of the American public self-identified as middle class, conducted his own investigation. He discovered that the *Fortune* survey had only offered respondents three choices: lower, middle, and upper class. What he found in his own project was that, if "working class" were an option, 51% of his respondents selected it,

[7] Hollingshead and Redlich, chapter 11; and Myers and Roberts, chapter 8.

while only 43% would then describe themselves as "middle class."[8] One can only assume that the working-class subjects in 1950s psychological investigations weren't given the option of defining their own socioeconomic position.

However, although the name of the "working class" was apparently too proletarian-sounding for Cold War sensibilities, the idea of occupation was clearly associated with socioeconomic level. In fact, this link was extremely important to observers in the 1950s, given the absence of other ways to understand or talk about socioeconomic differentiation. The sociological and psychological literature on class fostered this association, relying on occupation, sometimes in conjunction with education, to categorize class positions.[9] As Leonard Reissman accurately noted in 1959, "[o]ccupation has become the most frequently used index of class."[10] Using occupation in this way, investigators ranked occupational categories hierarchically according to prestige levels. These rankings leaned heavily on the distinction between intellectual and manual labor—the comfortable categories of "white collar" and "blue collar," which were more acceptable to Americans than descriptions involving the word "class." This methodological and conceptual centrality of occupation may help to explain why, through the 1950s and 1960s, and until the development of cultural studies and working-class studies, a rhetoric of "labor" seemed to stand in for a national dialogue about class.

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[8] Centers, 1949; *Fortune* article discussed in Vanneman and Cannon, 47-48.
[9] Hollingshead's Index of Social Position, employed by the Hollingshead and Redlich study, included "ecological area of residence" as well; Hollingshead and Redlich, 37.
[10] Reissman, 144.

Industrial Psychology

Since Frederick Winslow Taylor published his systematic theory of industrial management in the early 1900s, corporate interests have attempted to use principles of psychology to control workers.[11] Taylor's "scientific management" system used detailed time and motion studies to identify the most efficient way to complete a task, then required workers to strictly adhere to those specific movements. Taylor also radically altered the way work was completed and evaluated by jettisoning the traditional "work gang" approach in which groups of workers were the unit of production, as well as the entities to which pay rates and bonuses were allotted. Taylor found that system inefficient, and argued that the individual worker could be more effectively motivated and evaluated. He claimed that "[p]ersonal ambition always has been and will remain a more powerful incentive to exertion than a desire for the general welfare."[12] While individual financial incentives can clearly motivate workers, it is important to note that many present-day sociologists and psychologists have identified class-based differences in that arena. While most middle-class individuals are socialized to value individualism and competition, many members of the working class develop a stronger affiliation with group membership and fitting in.[13]

Taylor touted his system as a way for workers and management to evolve away from their "old mentality" of conflicting interests and toward one of cooperation: workers

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[11] See especially Frederick Winslow Taylor, *The Principles of Scientific Management* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1913 [c1911]), and *Shop Management* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911).
[12] Quote from Taylor, *Shop Management* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1971/1903), 37, quoted in Peter van Drunen, Pieter J. van Strien, and Eric Haas, "Work and Organization," in Jansz and van Drunen, 140.

would have to adhere to management's detailed work plans, rather than performing tasks as they themselves thought best. But management, for its part, would have to reward workers' increased productivity with generous bonuses of up to, but never exceeding, an extra 60 percent. Although Taylor believed that his system was in the workers' best interest, he also warned that bonuses of more than the recommended 60 percent could result in workers who were "shiftless, extravagant, and dissipated," betraying an underlying middle-class paternalism. Additionally, many managers ignored both his insistence on incentive bonuses and his warnings against raising production norms, with the result that the practical application of Taylorism spawned intense resentment in workforces. After a 1910 time study at a government arsenal in Massachusetts sparked a strike, U.S. Representative William Wilson, a former miner and future Secretary of Labor, took Taylor to task for using the veneer of scientism to give employers even more power over their employees.[14]

Hugo Münsterberg, the head of the psychological laboratory at Harvard, admired Taylor's work but believed that Taylor erred by neglecting psychology in his system. In his 1912 *Psychologie und Wirtschaftsleben: Ein Beitrag zur angewandten Experimental-Psychologie,* Münsterberg described the beneficial relationship that he envisioned for psychology and industry. While the German title was simply descriptive ("Psychology and Business: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology"), the English version

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[13] See Jensen, "Across the Great Divide," and Stephens, Markus, and Townsend.

[14] See van Drunen, van Strien, and Haas, 139. For the Waterford, Mass. strike and hearings, see Robert Kanigel, *The One Best Way: Frederick Winslow Taylor and the Enigma of Efficiency* (New York, Viking: 1997).

published the following year suggested a stronger claim: *Psychology and Industrial Efficiency*. Although the book's title reflects a management perspective, Münsterberg, like Taylor, insisted that implementation of his plans would benefit workers as well, "We must not forget," he wrote, "that the increase of industrial efficiency by future psychological adaptation and by improvement of the psychophysical conditions is not only in the interest of the employers, but still more of the employees; their working time can be reduced, their wages increased, their level of life raised." [15]

Münsterberg outlined several arenas in which he believed that psychology could benefit business, such as worker fatigue, monotony, physiology, movement, training, and the effects of alcohol, He also advocated the application of psychology to advertising. However, one aspect of his work received much more attention, and had far greater impact on industry, than the others: over the course of the next two decades, American business wholeheartedly embraced Münsterberg's suggestion that psychological testing techniques could be used to facilitate personnel selection. In 1915, the Carnegie Institute of Technology established the Division of Applied Psychology, the first psychological consulting service for industry. The facility focused on developing personnel selection tools to help reduce employee turnover. The same year, Carnegie debuted a Bureau of Salesmanship Research, which was funded by annual $500 subscriptions from 30 participating companies; two years later, a Research Bureau for Retail Training was added. Though Carnegie took the lead in providing psychological services to industry,

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[15] See van Drunen, Strien, and Haas, 142-143; Ward, 167-168; Münsterberg, *Psychologie und Wirtschaftsleben* (Leipzig: J. A. Earth, 1912); *Psychology and Industrial Efficiency* (Boston: Houghton-

other psychologists followed throughout the nineteen teens. World War I provided a large-scale laboratory in which psychologists could refine their standardized testing procedures, as they administered the group intelligence test to 1.7 million recruits before war's end. In addition, psy professionals responded to the demands of war by developing tests for vocational aptitude.[16]

After the war, the next major application of psychology in the workplace was the result of what is now known as the Hawthorne studies. In 1924, the Western Electric Company initiated a series of studies on the effects of various working hours, rest periods, and lighting levels at its Hawthorne plant in Cicero, Illinois. In the lighting study, two groups of workers were given the same tasks in two different rooms; in one room, the level of light was kept constant, and in the other, it was varied. However, the results were unexpected: both the control and experimental groups increased productivity during the project, regardless of lighting levels. Over the span of nine years, Western Electric researchers explored possible reasons for the boost in productivity. They eventually theorized that the increased management attention to workers in the study had made the workers feel valued, and that this positive emotional response had heightened the workers' motivation to perform well.[17]

Mifflin, 1913).

[16] For Münsterberg's impact, see Ward, p. 168; and van Drunen, Strien, and Haas, 143. For Carnegie, see V. W. Bingham, "Psychology Applied," *The Scientific Monthly* 16, no. 2 (Feb. 1923): 141-159; and Loren Baritz, *The Servants of Power: A History of the Use of Social Science in American Industry* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1960), 39-41. Quote from Münsterberg, *Psychology and Industrial Efficiency*, 308-309.

[17] Yeh Hsueh, "The Hawthorne Experiments and the Introduction of Jean Piaget in American Industrial Psychology, 1929-1932," *History of Psychology* 5, no. 2 (2002): 163-189; and Ward, 170-172.

Study results trickled out piecemeal in journal articles and books until 1934, when a more complete history, *Management and the Worker: Technical vs. Social Organization in an Industrial Plant*, was published. The studies' impact on the developing field of industrial psychology was enormous: one 1947 article quotes an unnamed enthusiast's claim that "the Hawthorne experiments are to social science what Galileo's demonstration of falling weights was toe the physical sciences."[18] The Hawthorne experiments were significant in that they marked a pioneering use of "soft," or qualitative, social science in industry, rather than the customary quantitative research; rather than simply measuring responses, these studies aimed to understand the worker's experience. One particular aspect of the experiment was widely publicized: Hawthorne researchers had discovered that worker compliance could be increased by simply providing a forum for worker complaints, even if those complaints were never addressed. If workers believed they had a voice, their resistance to management practices decreased dramatically. Unsurprisingly, however, once workers became aware that their grievances were simply being aired, not addressed, they were critical, as when a 1949 United Auto Workers' magazine described the study as "prying into the psychiatric bowels of factory workers."[19]

By the 1950s, it is clear that labor had ample reason to mistrust industrial psychology. A then-progressive Daniel Bell charged in 1947 that social science research in industry didn't take workers seriously, and that researchers "uncritically adopt

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[18] In Daniel Bell, "Adjusting Men to Machines: Social Scientists Explore the World of the Factory," *Commentary* 3 (January 1947), 79-88; quote on 81.

industry's own conception of workers as *means* to be manipulated or adjusted to impersonal ends" (italics in original), In 1957, industrial psychologist William Gomberg outlined the reasons for unionists' skepticism about his profession. He acknowledged that scientific management's "one best way" of performing tasks was dehumanizing and unrealistic; he noted that the vocational testing in the 1920s often went hand in hand with "open shop" union-busting campaigns, and that the tests were sometimes used as anti-union weapons; he described the "authoritarian control" facilitated by the Hawthorne experiment, and critiqued its researchers for ignoring the influence of unequal power relationships between management and labor. And current observers, too, have documented an overwhelming pro-management orientation in industrial psychology.[20]

IO psychologist Michael Zickar has suggested several reasons for this early alignment with management. He notes that management ties facilitated IO psychologists' access to data, allowing employees to be interviewed or tested while they were on the clock. He also argues that the alignment with management was more financially lucrative and prestigious than a neutral position or an affiliation with labor would have been. Additionally, very few early IO psychologists were strong proponents of labor. Zickar suggests that the lack of early IO leaders who played that role dissuaded future practitioners. Zickar also describes labor unions' early mistrust of psychologists, as well as social scientists in general. Additionally, psychologists have generally embraced a

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[19] "Deep Therapy on the Assembly Line," *Ammunition,* April 1949, 47-48, quoted in Baritz, 114.
[20] Bell, 86-88; William Gomberg, "The Use of Psychology in Industry: A Trade Union Point of View," *Management Science* 4 (July 1957): 348–70. See also Walter R. Nord, "Continuity and Change in Industrial/Organization Psychology: Learning from Previous Mistakes," *Professional Psychology* 13, no. 6 (December 1982): 942-953, and Zickar.

perspective that, like functionalism in sociology, emphasizes common goals instead of conflict. This perspective—that of the personnel management school—minimized the conflicting interests and power dynamics that many unionists saw as central to their relations with management. Interestingly, Zickar argues that the financial motive was not a primary one, based on the fact that neither economists nor sociologists embraced a management perspective in the way that psychologists did.[21] However, Zickar fails to recognize that by mid-century, psychologists had different expectations of financial reward than did other social scientists. Unlike sociologists or economists, large numbers of psychologists were establishing successful private practices in this era, a fact that could not have escaped the IO professionals.

There were exceptions. Gomberg himself maintained a pro-labor perspective throughout his thirty-year publishing career; Ross Stagner, president of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology from 1965-1966, remained staunchly pro-labor; and Arthur Kornhauser worked to develop an industrial psychology that would focus on improving worker wellbeing. Kornhauser and the others, unlike most of their contemporaries, were acutely aware of middle-class tendencies to blame low-income people for their lack of success and for their problems. From 1951 to 1957, Kornhauser studied the mental health of Detroit autoworkers under a grant from NIMH. Starting with his concern over the body of literature indicating higher levels of psychological problems in low-income groups, Kornhauser sought to find out whether factory workers were well

[21] Zickar, 152-160.

adjusted, and whether their relative status at work had any bearing on that adjustment. His work controlled for education, background, and preexisting mental issues, and focused on how the men fared once in the factory. In contrast to the "deficiency model" studies that assumed a relationship between low socioeconomic position and poor mental health, Kornhauser found that "mental health is dependent on factors associated with the job," and suggested a series of plausible causes, including low pay, noisy and stressful factory environments, unused potential, repetitive work, and lack of autonomy.[22]

National Institute for Labor Education

The relative success of unions in the 1950s led to standardization of union processes, an expansion of union bureaucracy, and a widening of the scope of union activities. As part of that widening scope, The National Institute of Labor Education was chartered in the fall of 1957. This new organization solidified what had begun in 1951 as a temporary liaison between university industrial relations departments and AFL-CIO education directors. Its board membership was drawn from an assortment of academics, government bureaucrats, and labor representatives, the latter of whom were hand-picked by AFL-CIO president George Meany. NILE's stated purpose was to "foster experimentation in labor education and increase the educational opportunities provided for workers," and mental health was on its agenda from the beginning, in addition to

[22] Arthur Kornhauser, "Toward an Assessment of the Mental Health of Factory Workers: A Detroit Study," in *Mental Health of the Poor,* ed. Frank Riessman, Jerome Cohen, and Arthur Pearl (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), 49-56 (53). Riessman later served on the advisory committee of the National Institute for Labor Education's Mental Health Project, the case study of this chapter.

other topics such as individuals' union participation, community participation, use of leisure time, civil liberties, and technological change.[23]

This was the environment in which NILE, clearly backed by labor interests but taking pains to insist that it didn't speak for labor, expressed its interest in mental health. However, the organization was conceived as a research broker rather than a research entity; it obtained and disbursed funding, but didn't conduct its own research, so in 1958, NILE executive director Joseph Mire began the search for a psychological professional to head a mental health study. He found Robert Reiff, a clinical psychologist who had been a shop steward in the Detroit auto industry. Reiff wasn't his first choice—he had made at least one previous offer, asking Karl U. Smith, a psychology professor teaching in the business school at Indiana University, to direct the program on a part-time basis. But Smith had decided not to take on the project, and Reiff became principal investigator.[24]

The first order of business was to secure funding, and Mire and Reiff managed to obtain an initial grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to support a year of secondary source research and planning. Their timing was good: NIMH was just ten years old, and had seen its budget grow exponentially during that period. While its Research Grants and Fellowships Branch had funded 37 projects in 1948, its first year of operation, for a total of $366,961, by 1960—the first year that the NILE Program applied

[23] "Education Center Set Up for Labor," *New York Times,* 13 October 1957, 58.

[24] Mire's executive search cited an April 12, 1961 unpublished letter from Mire to Smith, Accession No. 5545 Box 14 Folder 7, NILER. Grant and proposal information in Reiff, Unpublished National Institute of Labor Education Mental Health Program final report, 1966, Box 32, no folder, NILER.

for funding—NIMH made 908 awards for a total amount of $18,406,509. Three years later, the total award amount had almost doubled again, to $34 million.[25]

Luckily also, the early NIMH funding philosophy cast a wide net. While a disproportionate number of projects involved child development, juvenile delinquency, physiological psychology, and pharmacology, NIMH funded projects in incredibly diverse areas. As one observer acknowledged, "lacking definite clues to the etiology or best methods of treatment of mental illness, it is wisest to support the best research in any and all fields related to mental illness." This eclectic approach thus funded researches on topics as varied as hypnosis, speech intonation, and test anxiety. It also funded a small number of projects that addressed social class. A Harvard project received a year of funding to study the antecedents of adolescent behavior in lower classes; a University of Michigan study received three years of funding to investigate shift work and mental health (1960-1962); a separate University of Michigan project examined job environment and mental health performance (1960). But from a listing of the top 10 academic institutions whose researchers were recipients of NIMH funding between 1948 and 1963, only those three projects—out of 350 total—explicitly involved social class.

The Mental Health Program: Theoretical Orientation and Development

The initial NILE proposal specified two kinds of projects that the Mental Health Program would develop: projects that would use labor organizations as a "channel for mental health education," and projects that would explore how unions could help

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[25] Charles E. Rice, "The Research Grants Program of the National Institute of Mental Health and the Golden Age of American Academic Psychology," in *Psychology and the National Institute of Mental Health: A Historical Analysis of Science, Practice, and Policy*, ed. Wade E. Pickren and Stanley F. Schneider (Washington , DC: American Psychological Association, 2005), 63.

"[adjust] plant conditions to meet psychological needs of workers."[26] While both project types clearly reflect the NILE emphasis on labor's stake in mental health, the underlying assumptions of the two descriptions differ notably. The first project type, mental health education, reflects an older progressive tradition of so-called "uplift," and is basically an attempt to continue longstanding efforts at paternalistic mental hygiene education. This goal reflected the parent NILE's own focus as a labor education entity, but was also clearly a response to reports in the literature of low-income group resistance to and misunderstanding of psychology, reports that were discredited by the 1970s and shown to reflect practitioner class biases more than patient deficiencies.[27] However, based on worries about such alleged deficiencies, the labor leaders and psychological practitioners on the NILE board made educating workers about mental health central to their project. It is important to note that the premise of this educational model is that it is the worker who is deficient, and who needs to change.

The second project type, adjusting plant conditions to meet the needs of workers, is based on a very different assumption; its premise is that plant conditions, not the worker, are deficient. Industrial psychologist Arthur Kornhauser was a pioneer of this approach, and the NILE Program's principal investigator, Robert Reiff, emphasized this perspective, but it was definitely the minority view. It is clear from the two project types that the NILE Program both conformed to and challenged middle-class assumptions about lower-income groups, but Reiff chose to highlight his role as challenger. In his

[26] Reiff, Final Report, 4, NILER.

final report to NIMH, eight years after the NILE Program began, Reiff decried "the managerial bias of industrial mental health programs and their near-exclusive concern with increased productivity and efficiency," and insisted that, under his guidance, the Program's orientation had focused on "maximizing the worker and his potentialities rather than maximizing output."[28]

However, despite Reiff's claims, the surviving documentation from the NILE Program tells a different story. It provides a fascinating glimpse of how even the most well-intentioned middle-class attempts to address working-class issues could be weighted with faulty assumptions and miscommunications. For example, early in the program, Reiff air mailed a request to Lew Carliner, a United Autoworkers appointee to the advisory committee, to ask him to arrange a get-together at his home so that faculty at the Washington School of Psychiatry and "some labor people" could meet. The explanation for his request was awkward: "You will notice, in the Progress Report," he wrote, "I state that the top labor leaders of the country want education in behavioral science, but evidently this is only hearsay evidence and I would like to have a frank discussion with some of them to find out exactly what their feelings about this are."[29] Reiff, apparently acting with the best of intentions, initially presumed to speak for labor leaders based only on hearsay.

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[27] See Laura Smith, "Psychotherapy, Classism, and the Poor," *American Psychologist* 60, no. 7 (2005): 687-696.
[28] Reiff, unpublished final report, 8-9.
[29] December 15, 1959 letter from Reiff to Carliner. Box 34 Folder: Consultants 1963 Carliner, NILER.

The Awkwardness of Addressing Class

Another problematic perspective was aired at an advisory board committee meeting in 1960, still early in the program. Charles Strother, a psychology professor from the University of Washington, wrote a note asking whether "research in theoretical class questions [would] raise antagonisms to the educational project on labor's part." While his concern may have been a reaction to the conservatism of business unionism, it could just as credibly reflect his embarrassed middle-class assumption that it would be impolite to draw attention to workers' subordinate class positions.[30] The handwritten meeting notes give no indication of a clear answer, but later another academic suggested conducting a survey of psychiatrists to find out "if they have labor patients and what their experience is." This proposed reliance on professional-class informants to provide working-class perspectives seems problematically indirect, and suggests an unintentional silencing of the non-middle class perspective.[31] Both of these moments indicate that at least some of the middle-class board members, despite the mission of the Program, had no real contact with or understanding of working-class people.

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[30] Gerrie Casey describes a similar dynamic among some of her middle-class faculty colleagues at the City University of New York, who intentionally avoid discussions of class with their predominantly working-class students out of what Casey sees as a misguided fear of causing embarrassment or offense. Casey, "But She Brings So Much More to the Table!: The Not-So-Hidden Injuries of Class and Race at the City University of New York" (paper presented at the biannual conference of the Center for Study of Working Class Life, Stony Brook, New York, June 2008).

[31] Many working-class theorists address the silencing of working-class voices; see, for instance, Barbara Jensen; Michelle Fine and Lois Weis, *Silenced Voices and Extraordinary Conversations: Re-Imagining Schools* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2003); and Tony Crowley, *Language in History: Theories and Texts* (London: Routledge, 1996), chapter 5.

Despite the limits of their cultural understanding, participants seemed to have a generally progressive agenda. Mire, a nonacademic, suggested making work more pleasant, and the next day Strother asked for suggestions about how to conduct research on the effects that working conditions might have on the mental health of workers. Strother's question, which clearly reflects Kornhauser's work, is the only early indication of thoughts about "maximizing the worker and his potentialities." When the advisory committee meeting notes were typed, the front page of the final copy was marked with a large red stamp reading: "FOR PRIVATE USE ONLY NOT FOR PUBLICATION." The document specified that the Program's first and primary objective should be meeting the mental health education needs of labor—in other words, falling back on the perception that the main problem was the failure of the working class to appropriately understand and take advantage of the benefits of mainstream psychology. Research into labor and mental health issues, which could potentially challenge those perceptions by examining class-based psychological practices, unhealthy work environments, and the like, would be secondary.

Labor's Role in the Program

As the Program continued, it became clear that Reiff was fighting an uphill battle in his efforts to create a true collaboration of academics and labor representatives. The Program was never designed to hire its own researchers, but rather planned to recruit collaborative research teams, approve projects, and disburse the NIMH funds. Reiff consistently reminded academic participants that the projects were required to be collaborative. In his first newsletter to research teams, distributed in 1961, Reiff wrote:

> The cooperation of labor is essential for the successful completion of the Project … It is therefore essential that university study committees should be truly cooperative enterprises between representatives of labor organizations and university personnel. Labor representatives must become regular members of the committees and should participate on an equal basis with members of the university team. … N.I.L.E. … will not support a university-union study committee which does not include representatives of the labor movement.[32] [Emphasis in original.]

While the emphasis seems awkwardly heavy handed to modern ears, Reiff's concern was apparently justified. In a private letter to the board, Reiff mentioned that two University of Michigan researchers, Drs. John French and Robert Kahn, had committed to the Program, but added, "Dr. French, however, qualified his willingness to work on this study by stipulating that he felt that the kind of labor people whom he had to work with would be crucial. He was concerned with the problem of labor people understanding the problems of basic research. We assured him that we would try to find labor representatives who would understand the problems of basic research." Although Dr. French's obvious condescension would seem to make him a less-than-desirable candidate for a program whose stated goal was "maximizing the worker and his potentialities," there is no indication in the records that his suitability for the work was ever questioned.[33]

It is too easy, of course, to criticize Reiff for not living up to his own rhetoric. Administrative positions require compromise and the ability to actually produce results, and very few ideologues administrate well. But other signals from this period also

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[32] Reiff, N.I.L.E. Mental Health Project *Bulletin* 1 (May 1961), Box 5 Folder 14, NILER.

indicate that Reiff's approach may be problematic. Earlier that spring, the man that Mire had originally wanted to direct the program, Karl Smith, answered his friend Mire's request for help this way:

> Certainly, I will be glad to serve on your committee, if [for] no other reason than to express my views about the nature of your man, Bob Reiff. … I am going to explain … how the program has been altered, watered down, and turned into an adjustment conformity program by Reiff. … I am going to ask Ivan to appoint a subcommittee of some sort or another to see … that the money is not wasted by a series of clinical psychological and psychiatric talkie artists.[34]

Mire's reply reminded Smith that he had been given a chance to direct the project, and that it was only natural for the project to have shifted to reflect its actual director's perspectives. Then, since they were friends, he ended with a joke.[35] And Mire himself could certainly seem ambivalent about NILE's orientation; in correspondence with a university representative that same spring, he wrote, "The union people are putting a lot of pressure on us to include them in the program," a statement that raises serious questions about how serious administrators were about the collaborative nature of the Program.

The Research Agenda

Perhaps the best way to evaluate the extent of the NILE Program's challenge to middle-class normativity is by examining the research agendas chosen for funding. Reiff

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[33] April 16, 1961 letter from Reiff to the executive committee, Box 34, Folder: Advisory Committee 1961, NILER.

[34] March 27, 1961 letter from Smith to Mire, Box 5, Folder 14, NILER.

[35] He wrote, "As per your request, I am adding another story, presumably also coming from Republican sources. Somebody asked for directions on how to get a job in the new administration. Back came the reply: 'Go to Harvard, and turn left.'" April 12, 1961 letter from Mire to Smith, Box 5, Folder 14, NILER.

and NILE had vetted ten projects, and were requesting funding to begin January 1, 1963, and extend for four years. Three of the ten teams withdrew from consideration for various reasons—Cornell missed a deadline, UCLA was unable to secure labor support, and Roosevelt bristled at NILE's suggested project changes and decided to apply to NIMH independently. The remaining projects were varied. Wayne State University submitted three separate proposals; others came from Rutgers University, the University of Minnesota, Ohio State University, and the University of California at Berkeley. Three of the final proposals were for traditional mental health education programs, reflecting an underlying assumption that it is the worker who is deficient and needs to change. Another two teams planned to study the effects of certain situations on workers—prolonged unemployment and technological innovation. These two projects seem assumption neutral; they neither reflect middle-class perspectives nor necessarily challenge them. Another team proposed an educational project that would not only educate workers about mental health, but also educate mental health professionals about workers. While the first part of this proposal is traditional, the second part allows the possibility of a challenge to existing assumptions. Only one of the chosen teams submitted a proposal that would have clearly challenged mainstream assumptions about low-income groups.

Wayne State's first proposal was a straightforward plan to develop education materials on mental health problems "as they actually confront union leaders in the shop." The team explained that such problems often manifest themselves as "chronic

absenteeism, or peculiar or idiosyncratic behavior and usually end up in the grievance procedure," and proposed to develop a casebook for union stewards and committeemen.

The Rutgers University proposal aimed to develop a rehabilitation program for union members returning from mental hospitals, a traditionally difficult transition. The research plan called for a survey of the problem and its scope, a more in-depth study of actual returning patients, and a series of workshops with labor leaders to develop solutions. Here, though, the challenges were framed in terms of the inappropriate and stigmatizing reactions of co-workers, so followed the traditional mental health education model and assumptions. Additionally, the language of the proposal did not demonstrate any particular understanding of or empathy with working-class perspectives. In contrast to more sensitive theorists of the era who consciously attempted to empathetically understand the unique nature of working-class problems, the Rutgers team sounded clinical and detached about their topic, writing "It is hoped that if an adequate conceptualization of stress can be developed for the working class patient that his rehabilitation can be handled more intelligently. It is suspected that our eventual understanding of working class patients may be different from our present general understanding of middle class patients."[36]

The University of Minnesota also proposed a mental health education campaign, although this team's proposal suggested addressing mental health aspects of collective bargaining and legislative and social action as well as direct education of workers. The

[36] Rutgers University, "Project Proposal: Study to Formulate Rehabilitation Program for Union Members Returning from Mental Hospitals," Box 5 Folder 13, NILER.

first three proposals, then, conform to the traditional mental-heath education paradigm. In addition, Wayne State's second submission suggested a mental health education project aimed at workers themselves, with the secondary goal of training psychological professionals to effectively educate working-class people about mental health. While the first part of this plan falls within the traditional parameters, the second part allows the possibility of a challenge to existing assumptions.

The next two proposals are, at least in proposal form, relatively neutral. Ohio State University submitted a plan to investigate the effects of prolonged unemployment on workers' mental health, and The University of California at Berkeley proposed a study of technological innovations in an auto plant, focusing on the impact on workers' mental health. The team discussed findings that industrial workers' gratifications on the job were more dependent on social relationships at work than on the work itself, and pointed out that automation disrupted those social relationships by dismantling work groups.

One proposal, however, did seem to have potential to challenge middle-class assumptions about low-income groups. The third Wayne State University proposal sought to adapt psychotherapy to the needs of working-class patients. Citing the body of literature about the middle-class assumptions underlying the psychotherapeutic process, the team proposed to identify specific ways in which that process differs between classes

by evaluating the actual therapies of an equal number of middle- and working-class patients as those therapies occurred.[37]

There is no indication in the records of the NILE Program that the Wayne State research was ever conducted.[38] What is clear is that, despite Reiff's later assertion that the NILE Program focused on "maximizing the worker and his potentialities," the bulk of the proposals selected did reflect typical middle-class perceptions about low-income groups. In light of Reiff's desire to challenge those perceptions, it seems that several factors combined to neutralize that challenge. First, the university base of the projects likely fostered the traditional middle-class view, since virtually all industrial relations departments were, by definition, pro-management. Second, the intellectual parameters that each team's primary investigator was comfortable with would almost certainly reflect the bulk of contemporary scholarship, which was traditional. Finally, it is likely that team members and NILE Program staff self-censored toward a traditional view to maximize their chances of having their projects funded by NIMH.

To Err Is Human: The Director

By late 1962 and early 1963, Reiff was embroiled in protecting his turf. Advisory committee member Margery Mack, a social science consultant for the mental health section of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Region V, called him to

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[37] All project descriptions from "Proposed Plan of Work of the N.I.L.E. Mental Health Project from the Text of the Grant Application Submitted to the National Institute of Mental Health," June 1, 1962, Box 5 Folder 13: Mental Health Continuation Project II 1962, NILER.

[38] By March 1963, the program director for the Wayne State project, Frank Auld, had withdrawn his proposal from NILE and applied for funding directly from NIMH, as noted in personal correspondence from Auld to an NIMH official on March 4, 1963; Box 33, unnumbered folder, NILER. However, none of

task for the description of his role that he drafted for the NIMH proposal. She particularly questioned his claim that he should assess the team projects for adherence to their goals, since, as she reminded him, Public Health Service policy was to allow each grantee full freedom once the grant was made. Reiff seems to have written himself a more authoritative role in the Program than funding rules (or professional practice) would allow.

At the same time that Mack was trimming Reiff's wings, Mire was noting in his personal files that NIMH would prefer to award individual grants to each research team rather than to NILE, as it had in the past, but that it hoped to keep Reiff on as co-director of each project "to maintain the character of a cooperative project," though one wonders if "appearance" wouldn't have been a more precise choice of words. At the very least, the shifting of funds to the research teams deprived Reiff of any real supervisory power over the projects. During the same period, Lawrence Rogin, director of education for the AFL-CIO and vice-president of NILE, refused Reiff's invitation to join the advisory committee of the Program. Rogin's curt message ended, "I definitely do not want to serve. I have neither the time nor the specific interest. I think the three representatives which you have are satisfactory."[39]

Reiff responded by throwing himself into public relations work. He released the Program's first report in June 1963, "Issues in the New National Mental Health Program

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Auld's subsequent publications addressed the topic of class, nor did the work of the other researchers listed on the proposal.

[39] July 10, 1962 Letter from Mack to Reiff, Box 34 Folder: Consultants 1963/64, NILER; January 22, 1963 memo to files from Mire, Box 5, File 11, NILER; and July 12, 1962 letter from Rogin to Reiff, Box 34 Folder: Consultants 1963 Rogin, NILER.

Relating to Labor and Low Income Groups," which, as the title indicates, broadened the Program's focus to include a broader swath of the non-middle-class population, insisting that "there appears to be no significant difference [between what he now calls "blue collar workers" and low-income groups] insofar as attitudes, values and expectations about mental illness are concerned." The report justified that expansion by adding, inaccurately, that the labor movement has "historically and traditionally been the organized expression of the needs and interests of all the deprived sections of the community."

"Issues in the New National Mental Health Program…" also incorporated some now-familiar social justice concepts like the accessibility of services to lower-income people, both in terms of geographic location and hours of operation, since many people in this population lack control over their own working hours. It also, for the first time, addressed ways the providers could avoid making patients feel stigmatized by free or reduced-fee rates. Finally, it articulated the "need to help mental health professionals increase their understanding of the style of life, values, and attitudes of blue-collar workers and their families."[40] While all of these points seem like standard progressive fare to current observers, they demonstrate a departure in style and in perspective from both previous Program writings and from the four reports published later.

In addition to releasing the report, Reiff instituted a new newsletter, titled "Mental Health Issues." The debut issue again summarized NILE's mission, wrote a laudatory

[40] NILE, "Issues in the New National Mental Health Program Relating to Labor and Low Income Groups," June 1963.

article about a Wayne State University "Psychology of Adjustment" course sponsored by the Wayne County AFL-CIO, and, of course, recapped President Kennedy's Message to Congress, an unprecedented pitch for mental health funding. Soon after Kennedy's address, companion bills House Resolution 3688 and Senate Bill 755 were introduced to authorize federal funding for community mental health centers.[41] Reiff, apparently still in the writing mood, wrote a nine-page statement in support of HR 3688 and sent it to the congressional committee overseeing the resolution.[42] Though the records don't indicate how Mire was alerted to Reiff's politicking, we do know Mire's response was a stern message to Reiff, reminding him that NILE's program objectives limited their activities to educational and research efforts alone. Lobbying was not only outside the scope of NILE's mission, but jeopardized the entity's tax exempt status. Reiff was instructed to desist.[43]

Around the same time, the progressivism demonstrated in "Issues in the New National Mental Health Program" seemed to wane. Mire wrote to Sylvia Scribner, whose official title was NILE associate director, but whose lack of an archival paper trail suggests she may have been more of an executive secretary to Reiff.[44] His note expressed sympathy that she and Reiff were disappointed in the "meager attendance of

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[41] NILE, *Mental Health Issues* 1 (April 1963), Box 5 Folder 11: Mental Health I Continuation Program Jan-June 1963, NILER.
[42] Rieff, Statement in Support of H.R. 3688, Box 5 Folder 11: Mental Health I Continuation Project Jan-June 1963, NILER.
[43] May 13, 1963 letter from Mire to Reiff, Box 5 Folder 11: Mental Health I Continuation Project Jan-June 1963, NILER.
[44] Scribner enrolled in gradate school after her work at NILE, completed a Ph.D. in psychology in 1970, and enjoyed an impressive teaching and publishing career.

labor people, both at the cocktail party and the program session." He pointed out, however, that the individuals in question

> are essentially local union people, in Detroit, Chicago, and somewhere in New Jersey. … The three people from the I.A.M. who did attend the cocktail party … felt quite uneasy, as they told me, and their presence was obviously of little value to the others or themselves. We may find it even more difficult to get them next time, unless we can make them feel needed.[45]

Mire's response indicates that Reiff was insensitive to the social awkwardness "local union people" might feel at a cocktail party, especially at one in which they were strangers. While Reiff was focused on his desire for an impressive demonstration of union participation, he was apparently oblivious to the discomfort of the actual union people who did participate. However, Reiff was familiar with the sociological literature on class, and it is surprising that he did not anticipate the awkwardness: according to sociologists, members of the working class prefer socializing with family and very close friends, and dislike socializing across status levels.[46]

As Mire's note to the files had suggested, NIMH decided to suspend the full grant approval pending resubmission as individual projects. Reiff, apparently not noticing the sinking ship, accepted a move from regular employment with NILE to a contractual agreement. On the face of it, though, the broader project was going well. Congress passed the Community Mental Health Centers Act in October; a number of unions were winning mental health insurance at the bargaining table; and a handful were establishing

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[45] March 8, 1963 letter from Mire to Scribner. Box 5 Folder 11: Mental Health I Continuation Project Jan-June 1963, NILER.

their own mental health centers. The enthusiasm and sense of possibility generated in the mental health community by President Kennedy's message to Congress and the subsequent enactment of the Community Centers Act must have been exhilarating.

But the Act had its opponents, and even sparked controversy among the President's advisors over whether the new resources would be used to improve and develop the existing mental health system, or whether the entire paradigm should be revised. The revisionists won, many mental hospitals lost their funding in favor of the new community centers, and traditional state control was ceded to or shared with the federal government.[47]

In the midst of the brouhaha, one voice was notably silent. Labor had not spoken out on the pending mental health issues as late as summer of 1963, as Program advisory board member Lisbeth Bamberger, assistant director of the Department of Social Security for the AFL-CIO, reminded Program participants at the June 1963 advisory board meeting. She counseled the group to be patient and prepared to contribute with information and suggestions when asked (and one can imagine that sentiment being directed at Reiff). Another member, Edward Linzer, director of program services for The National Association for Mental Health, Inc. asked a series of questions about NILE's relationship with the labor movement. As someone, presumably Reiff, parroted the party line that NILE doesn't speak for labor, Lew Carliner from United Autoworkers pointed

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[46] See, for example, Mirra Komarovsky, *Blue-Collar Marriage* (New York: Random House, 1962), especially chapter 14. Barbara Jensen, a counseling psychologist and academic, examines similar present-day class differences surrounding social expectations and preferences; Jensen, 174-175.

[47] David Mechanic, "Establishing Mental Health Priorities," *The Milbank Quarterly* 72 no. 3 (1994): 501-514.

out that the Program had expanded from its initial function, and suggested that the Program's labor representation be reviewed. Perhaps, he added, higher-ranking union officials should become involved.

And, in fact, organized labor did intensify its public involvement with mental health issues. In May 1964, the AFL-CIO sponsored a three-day Meeting on Mental Health in New York City. However, AFL-CIO organizers did not call on the NILE Mental Health Program to take a major role in the meeting. In fact, the Program's participation consisted of two paper presentations. Frank Riessman, a new member of NILE's advisory board and a faculty member at Columbia University, presented "The Under-Utilization of Mental Health Services by Workers and Low Income Groups: Causes and Cures." As the title implies, the paper listed examples of new mental health services for low-income people, then documented the fact that they weren't being used. It ended by calling on labor to help educate people about the benefits of mental health services. Riessman did try to differentiate between the old "traditional mental hygiene stress on 'attitude change,'" which he presumably recognized as centered around middle-class values and perspectives, and his current proposal, which he saw as "in keeping with the established orientation in labor education which links education with action" [emphasis in original].[48]

Reiff also presented a paper at the meeting, "New Directions in Mental Health for Labor and Professionals." However, Reiff's involvement in this major confluence of

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[48] Riessman, "The Under-Utilization of Mental Health Services by Workers and Low Income Groups: Causes and Cures," and Rieff, "New Directions in Mental Health for Labor and Professionals." Papers presented at the AFL-CIO Meeting on Mental Health May 20-22, 1964. Box 5 Folder: Mental Health IV Continuation Project July-Dec. 1964, NILER.

labor and mental health was minimal: he did not help with the organization of the meeting, and the single paper he presented was mostly recycled from earlier reports and proposals. In addition, by his name on the title page, he listed both his position as director of NILE and his new appointment as director of the division of psychology at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. While later board correspondence indicates that Reiff had hoped to develop his NILE and Einstein work in tandem, the board perceived a conflict of interest.

The Program's marginalized position at the meeting was no one-time oversight. With NIMH funding projects on an individual basis, the Program—and Reiff—were unnecessary. NIMH slashed the Program's budget and requested a final report. For his part, Reiff apparently refused to either recognize or acknowledge this shift, leading to two years of squabbles with the board. By the end of 1964, Reiff had tried to fund an Einstein project surreptitiously via the NILE Program, without the board's consent; had tried and failed to have the Program fund Reiff's travel to Europe for a meeting; and had begun a spat with the New York Central Labor Body over credit for part of a training plan. Reiff's financial accounting also became problematic; the board began questioning, then denying, reimbursement for various expenses, particularly those that seemed to be related to Reiff's position at Einstein. There were questions about where proceeds from report sales had gone, and expensive recording went missing from Reiff's office. Perhaps most frustrating for Mire and the board was Reiff's interminable delay in delivering a final report. By the time Reiff finally submitted the report in December 1966, it was more

than a year and a half late, the NILE board was threatening legal action, and NIMH was strongly suggesting that Reiff would never be funded again.

Conceptual Flaws

However, the Program had more deeply rooted problems than its choice of director. The philosophical disconnect indicated by the two primary Program goals of developing mental health education programs on one hand and adjusting plant conditions to benefit the worker's mental health on the other were never clearly identified or addressed by anyone involved in the Program. And Reiff, while paying lip service to the Kornhauser perspective, only briefly demonstrated a truly progressive view on the mental health of low-income and working-class individuals in "Issues in the New National Mental Health Program." Although he frequently reminded the Program's university researchers to incorporate labor participation in their work, he himself often neglected to include labor representatives in Program discussions and events.

Additionally, there were conceptual problems with both main components of the research part of the Program. The university researchers were based in industrial relations departments, which, as we have seen, tended to be overwhelmingly pro-management. In addition, the intellectual parameters that each team's primary investigator was comfortable with would almost certainly reflect the bulk of contemporary scholarship, which was traditional; and finally, it is likely that team members and NILE Program staff self-censored toward a traditional management view to maximize their chances of having their projects funded by NIMH.

For their part, the labor representatives involved were labor *leaders*, and thus more socialized into a middle-class worldview than were the rank-and-file workers. As trade unionist and writer Sidney Lens described the postwar labor representative, "His own salary and benefits become progressively larger by comparison with the members who still work at the lathe, and his economic stake tends to make him moderate just as the secure doctor or lawyer tends in the same direction. He is now an 'organization man.'" No rank-and-file workers were ever invited to participate in the NILE Program, and there is reason to doubt whether the officials who did participate completely understood the perspective of or the issues facing the average worker. One study published in the early 1960s found that even shop stewards, people in volunteer positions at the lowest level of union bureaucracy, identified with the professional union officials. They also tended to see rank-and-file workers as apathetic and in need of "a lesson."[49]

Other developments in the postwar period deradicalized unions and widened the gulf between membership and leadership. A newly elected Republican Congress responded to the wave of postwar labor strikes by passing the anti-union Taft-Hartley Act in 1947, overriding President Truman's veto. The new law curtailed a number of union strategies and provided more power to businesses. In addition, it prohibited communists from holding leadership positions in unions, resulting in large-scale anti-communist purges. Labor leaders turned to a model of business unionism that downplayed the natural conflict of interest between management and workers, emphasizing cooperation instead.

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[49] Sidney Lens, *The Crisis of American Labor* (New York: Sagamore Press, 1959), p. 223. The steward study is described in Sidney M. Peck, *The Rank and File Leader* (New Haven: College and University

Unions did manage to get wage increases for their members during the postwar prosperity boom, but often at the expense of autonomy on the shop floor. The model of business unionism expanded the administrative functions of unions to the extent that many unions themselves came to resemble large, bureaucratic businesses. Simultaneously, Cold War anti-communism provided union leaders with the means to purge rivals and stifle dissent about union strategies. Ultimately, business unionism seems to have made union leaders even poorer representatives of actual workers.[50]

Conclusions

While practitioners of industrial-organizational psychology were uniquely positioned to develop a more sympathetic and nuanced view of working people than other psychologists had, the discipline overwhelmingly did not take advantage of that position. Instead, its practitioners aligned themselves with management and used their professional knowledge to help industry weed out potential union members among job applicants, as well as to control and manipulate workers. It is unsurprising, then, that industrial workers developed negative views of psychology and its practitioners.

Press, 1963).

[50] Robert Zieger, *American Workers, American Unions, 1920-1985* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 108-114; Kim Moody, *An Injury to All* (London: Verso, 1988), chapter 3; Ian M. Taplin, "The Contradictions of Business Unionism and the Decline of Organized Labour," *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 11, no. 2 (1990): 249-278; and Robert A. Penney, "Overcoming Legacies of Business Unionism: Why Grassroots Organizing Tactics Succeed," in *Rebuilding Labor: Organizing and Organizers in the New Union Movement,* ed. Ruth Milkman and Kim Voss (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

Chapter Three. Popular Representations and Polysemic Readings of Psychology in the Postwar Period

For 50 years, millions of Americans chuckled over the *Peanuts* comic strip in their daily papers as Lucy invariably cut off Charlie Brown's angst-ridden soul searching with a dismissive one-liner and the inevitable tag line, "That will be 5¢, please." The representation of psychological professionals and psychological help as somehow similar to a bossy, self-interested elementary-schooler peddling advice from a makeshift lemonade stand apparently struck a chord with a sizeable part of the American public. And Lucy was by no means the only fictionalized psychotherapist capturing public attention in the postwar era. Psy professionals were also making appearances in short stories, novels, plays, movies, and the increasingly popular new medium of television.

These newly popular fictional representations reflected a much broader trend of public interest in psychology. Scores of newspaper and magazine articles offered enthusiastic accounts of this rapidly popularizing science. But observers, both in that era and the present one, noted an interesting difference between the factual and fictional representations. While the mass-circulation, mainstream nonfiction accounts of the psy sciences tended to be celebratory, a surprising percentage of the fictional representations of psy professionals were unflattering. Like *Peanuts'* Lucy, many fictional psychologists were portrayed as self-serving and uncaring; others were drawn as bumbling idiots; and a memorable handful were devious, manipulative, and sinister. This chapter explores the contours of these representative tropes. In addition, drawing on both cultural studies and mass media theory, it investigates the multifaceted ways in which these popular

representations both shaped Americans' perceptions of psychology and were shaped by them.

As psychology's scope, influence, and number of practitioners mushroomed in the postwar years, public interest in the profession expanded as well. Psychology and its practitioners became increasingly common topics in all forms of mass media. In response, practitioners vigorously attempted to shape the emerging public perception of their discipline, and demonstrated a great deal of concern over popular representations of the field. The same month that *Life* magazine concluded Ernest Havemann's celebratory series on "The Age of Psychology" in 1957, the editors of *American Psychologist* debuted a new regular column, "Psychology in the News," to help readers make sense of their profession's increasingly public profile. They hired a publicist with experience in science writing, Michael Amrine, as the regular columnist. Amrine began that first column by clearly differentiating his work from that of the mass-circulation press: "Things published about psychology perhaps fall into two classes: psychology as written by psychologists, for love and maybe for money, and 'psychological' articles written by nonpsychologists, for money and maybe for love."[1] He added, probably unnecessarily for his readers, that his approach reflected the "real" psychology. The column ran for eight years, crowing about positive press, harrumphing about negative press, publicizing skirmishes in the psychology-psychiatry turf wars, and vacillating between amazement at the new public interest in the profession and frustration at the public's inability or unwillingness to discriminate between Amrine's "real" psychology and competing

versions.

In fact, one of the most notable aspects of the explosion of psychological discourse in postwar America is its practitioners' apparent obsession with what the public thought of them. Situated between their shaky status in the broader medical community on the one hand and their new semi-celebrity status as emerging cultural icons on the other, psychological professionals seem to have spend an inordinate amount of time—and print space—trying to make sense of it all. The professional journals were rife with articles titled "The Public Image of Psychology," "The Image of the Psychiatrist," "The Public's Attitudes Towards Psychologists," "How Others See Us," "What the Citizen Knows about Psychiatry," "Psychology Versus Psychiatry: A Study of Public Image," and even "The Involvement of the Psychologist's Family in the Establishment of a Public Image of the Profession."[2] The main concerns outlined in this mini-genre of professional writing were the public's inability to differentiate between psychologists and psychiatrists; the popular conflation of "legitimate" psychologists with mind-cure proponents and other "quacks"; and the public's lack of familiarity with what psychological professionals actually did. Many of these articles urged practitioners to hone their public relations skills as well, as each practitioner was potentially an

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[1] Michael Amrine, "Psychology in the News," *American Psychologist* 12, no. 2 (February 1957): 103-104; quote on p. 103.

[2] Elton B. McNeil, "The Public Image of Psychology," *American Psychologist* 14, no. 8 (1959): 520-521; Henry A. Davidson, "The Image of the Psychiatrist," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 121, no. 4 (October 1964): 329-334; L. Guest, "The Public's Attitudes Toward Psychologists," *American Psychologist* 3 (1948): 135-139; Barbara Hampton, "How Others See Us," *Professional Psychology* 1, no. 4 (Summer 1970): 381-382; Frederick C. Redlich, "What the Citizen Knows about Psychiatry," *Mental Hygiene* 34 (1950): 64-79; F. J. Thumin and M. Zebelman, "Psychology Versus Psychiatry: A Study of Public Image," *American Psychologist* 22, no. 4 (1967): 282-286; and Esther Green Bierbaum, "The Involvement of the

ambassador to the public at large. In addition to these concerns, a number of psy professionals wrote—and write—about fictionalized representations of their professions.

Psychology in Popular Literature

Psychological practitioners appeared in popular literature read by Americans during the 1920s, debuting with the first popularization of psychology among the country's educated classes. From the beginning, portrayals were generally, though not universally, unflattering: the psychiatrist in Virginia Woolf's 1924 novel *Mrs. Dalloway* is bloodless and mercenary, and Mrs. Dalloway herself thinks of him as "obscurely evil." The 1930 English translation of Italo Svevo's *The Confessions of Zeno* features a petty and naïve analyst who believes a patient's outrageous lies, then ostensibly published the case notes from the patient's file in retaliation when the patient terminated his analysis. And Dick Diver, the analyst and protagonist of F. Scott Fitzgerald's 1934 *Tender Is the Night*, demonstrates his own weak character and lack of insight as he spirals into alcohol abuse, legal problems, and a disintegrating career. However, there were positive portrayals as well: in 1928, Ludwig Lewisohn crafted a sympathetic psychoanalyst-protagonist in *The Island Within*, a novel which Bertrand Russell complimented for the "penetrating quality of its psychology."[3]

Psychologist's Family in the Establishment of a Public Image of the Profession," *American Psychologist* 15, no. 3 (March 1960): 216.

[3] Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1925); Italo Svevo [pseud.], *The Confessions of Zeno,* trans. Beryl de Zoete (New York: New Directions, 1930); F. Scott Fitzgerald, *Tender Is the Night* (New York: Scribner, 1934); Ludwig Lewisohn, *The Island Within* (New York: Harper, 1928); Bertrand Russell, "Loyalty to One's Group vs. Impartial Attitude towards Mankind," *Jewish Daily Forward* (May 13, 1928), quoted in Ralph Melnick, *The Life and Work of Ludwig Lewisohn: A Touch of Wildness* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 476.

For the most part, though, representations of psy professionals in literature continued to disappoint the actual practitioners. The analyst in Mary McCarthy's 1942 *The Company She Keeps* is pleasant, well meaning, and professional, but less emotionally perceptive and intelligent than the heroine. She found him average and dull, and occasionally thought of him in terms such as "stupid" and a "blundering sophomore," though she still wanted to impress him.[4] Representations of even less intelligent psy professionals were common, such as those in Mac Hyman's 1954 best seller, *No Time for Sergeants,* and Joseph Heller's 1961 classic, *Catch 22*. Additionally, the trope of evil and manipulative psychiatrists continued in novels such as Graham Greene's 1943 *The Ministry of Fear,* William Lindsay Gresham's 1946 *Nightmare Alley,* and Mickey Spillane's 1947 *I, The Jury*.

This preponderance of negative representation inspired one psychological practitioner, Charles Winick, to compile a 1963 overview that he published as "The Psychiatrist in Fiction."[5] Reviewing thirty-four novels published between 1925 and 1961, Winick found a generally dismal picture. Most of the fictional psychiatrists in private practice, he noted, "do not seem to be helping their patients very much." Winick also noted a preponderance of "grave sexual and marital difficulties," practitioners who were less admirable than their patients, and professionals who were "not very bright." On the last point, Winick claimed that "there are approximately twice as many inept and foolish

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[4] Mary McCarthy, *The Company She Keeps* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1942), 286.

[5] Charles Winick, "The Psychiatrist in Fiction," *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 136, no. 1 (January 1963): 43-57. Winick himself was not a psychiatrist; he was a professor of sociology, but described himself as a "consulting psychologist." See "Appeal of P[ostal] S[ervice] Docket No. 22/155," online at http://www.usps.com/judicial/1986deci/22-155.htm.

psychiatrists in fictional institutions as there are devoted and intelligent ones."[6] Here, Winick was referring specifically to psychiatrists represented as working in institutions rather than in private practice. Frequently, the institutional novels relied for part of their narrative tension on a single psychiatrist who was intelligent, well meaning, and effective, but who had to contend with overwhelmingly inept and uncaring colleagues. This recurring theme seems to reflect the postwar ambivalence about institutions as well as conflicting attitudes towards psychiatry.

Perhaps most troubling to Winick, though, was "the fictional psychiatrist's lackluster ability to explain and predict other characters' behavior. … The relative flatness of their professional observations tends to give the reader a feeling that psychiatrists are fairly insightless persons."[7] The article emphasized that, even as mid-century writers incorporated psychological themes and insights into their plots and characters, they were reluctant to bestow those powers of insight on the psy professionals they created. Winick hypothesized several possible causes, including what he saw as a kind of rivalry between novelists and psychiatrists. In this view, writers' characterizations lead them into musings about individuals' motivations, feelings, and perceptions that is similar to work done by psy professionals. Therefore, Winick surmised, the writer "may, though his [sic] craft, be turning the tables on a potential enemy or rival by making the fictional psychiatrist troubled and unable to understand himself, but with motives that are

[6] Ibid., 53.
[7] Ibid.

clear to the outside observer."[8] It is important to note that, in this view, the unflattering portrayals of psy professionals have more to do with writers' insecurities and the resulting desire to "turn the tables" on a "potential enemy" than with any actual qualities of real psychiatrists.

While the present-day reader may acknowledge the similarity of novelists' and psychological professionals' interests and approaches, one is struck today by Winick's defensiveness. In addition to the "turning the tables" theory, Winick suggested three other possible reasons for the negative portrayals of psy characters. First, he supposed that, since many people are self-conscious around psy professionals, a given writer might be afraid of how psychiatrists would perceive the authorial self via the story. However, Winick never explained why a writer might mask that insecurity by portraying psychiatrists in unflattering ways. Second, he thought that a writer may be ambivalent about psychiatry, but for some unexplored reason "be able to voice only the negative side of his ambivalence."[9] Finally, he allowed that some writers might "actually perceive" psychiatrists as ineffective, he never acknowledged that at least some psy professionals were indeed ineffective, as are at least some members of any profession. In his frustration over the negative portrayals, Winick seems to taken the fictionalized image of psychiatrists as "insightless persons" and projected it back on to the writers themselves.

[8] Ibid., 55.
[9] Ibid.

The Caine Mutiny

Herman Wouk's *The Caine Mutiny* is a particularly rich example of popularized psychology in the mid-century novel.[10] Published in 1951, the novel spent 122 weeks on the *New York Times'* best-seller list, apparently tapping into a public nostalgia for the purposefulness of the war years. In a 1955 cover story, *Time* magazine called *Caine* "the biggest U.S. bestseller since *Gone with the Wind*."[11] For our purposes, the book's enthusiastic reception and broad readership make it an ideal vehicle through which to examine popular perceptions of psychology. The central focus of the novel is the protagonist's slow and circuitous maturation into a man of character aboard a Naval ship run by the petty, abusive tyrant Captain Queeg. The captain's punitive and unusual behavior intensifies until he finally freezes into indecision at the helm during a terrible storm. With the help of the protagonist, the naïve but noble executive officer Steve Maryk takes control of the ship and saves it, only to be court-martialed. Character itself is a major theme in the novel, and Wouk contrasts his ideal of manly character, epitomized by the Maryk, with psychology and its practitioners.

Tellingly, psychology is introduced in the novel by the character who turns out to be the villain of the story, an intellectual and writer named Tom Keefer who persuades Maryk that the captain is insane. However, when Keefer first plants that suggestion in

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[10] Herman Wouk, *The Caine Mutiny: A Novel of World War II* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1951).

[11] "Books: The Wouk Mutiny," *Time,* 5 September 1955. Online at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,893076,00.html

Maryk's mind, the reader is unaware of Keefer's manipulative and self-serving intentions. In fact, Keefer makes an impressive-sounding argument:

> Look, Steve, I'm no psychiatrist, but I've read a lot. I can give you a diagnosis of Queeg. It's the clearest picture I've ever seen of a psychopathic personality. He's a paranoid, with an obsessive-compulsive syndrome. I'll bet a clinical examination would back me up a hundred per cent. I'll show you the description of the type in the books—[12]

At this point, Keefer sounds persuasive, and the reader is positioned to be frustrated by Maryk's unsophisticated response: "Tom, it's a known fact that you read a hell of a lot more than I do and talk better … . You're all wound up in big words, paranoid, psychopath, and all that."[13]

However, the reader learns, along with Maryk, that Keefer's words were as insubstantial as his character. Keefer continues his strategy of persuasion, adding "diagnoses" of infantilism and inversion to his assessment of Queeg, and urging Maryk to take action against the captain for the good of the ship, the crew, and the Navy. However, when Maryk asks Keefer to accompany him to report on the captain's mental state, Keefer refuses, claiming that it's not his place. When Maryk finally relieves the captain of his command for reasons of mental instability, Keefer pretends to be shocked and lies under oath to hide his involvement. Keefer, intellectualism, and psychology itself suddenly appear shallow and suspect, and readers are left wishing that Maryk had followed his own instincts and ignored the "big words." The climax of the novel hinges

[12] Wouk, 260.
[13] Ibid.

on the court-martial, which in turn hinges on whether or not Queeg was insane at the time of the incident.

Wouk's characterization of the Navy psychiatrists who find Queeg sane also positions psychology as something that stands in opposition to moral character. One psychiatrist is "stout," "pink faced," and "good humored," all descriptors that seem intended to position him as intellectually insubstantial and, in light of the novel's celebration of mature masculinity, as "soft" as well. Early in his testimony, this psychiatrist explains that "normality, you know, is a fiction in psychiatry."[14] Maryk's defense attorney presses that statement to its logical conclusion, leading the psychiatrist to acknowledge the fine line between psychological adjustment (defined in its psychoanalytic sense as effective coping strategies for underlying problems) and illness, and making the psychiatrist appear not quite credible in the process. He comes across as complacent, a bit pompous, and less than straightforward. His colleague, described as "extremely slender" and "youthful looking," is presented as both inexperienced and arrogant. He insists that he fully understands the stresses of a Naval command, but is forced to later admit that he has only been in the Navy for six months and has never been to sea. In the world of this novel, the man is a poseur, and his psychology is an overhyped and ineffective tool for evaluating the real worth of men.

In this extraordinarily popular novel, then, psychology itself is introduced as a seemingly sophisticated concept, but that apparent sophistication is discredited by novel's

[14] Ibid., 404.

end. Psychology is introduced by the self-serving villain of the story, and is embraced by men who are dishonest, ineffective, inexperienced, and unmanly. The attorney "wins" his case by using the slippery language and concepts of psychology, but he recognizes that what he has done is immoral. In short, the idea of psychology is suspect in *The Caine Mutiny*, and is used to obfuscate reality and manipulate others. It is worth noting that no mid-century reviewer I am aware of mentioned the role that psychology itself played in the plot. The early reviews mentioned psychology, but in the context of describing Queeg's (and sometimes Maryk's, Keefer's, and the protagonist's) psychodynamic characteristics.

Mass Media Theory and Polysemy: Reading Representation

The popularity of *The Caine Mutiny* notwithstanding, novels were far from the most popular entertainment medium of the postwar era. The advent of television had sparked interest in mass media studies, fueled partly by public fears about television's influence on audience members. In the early days of mass media studies, researchers focused on their search for media effects on individuals. They tended to believe in a "silver bullet theory," positing that mass-mediated messages would affect all audience members in the same way and to the same extent. This perspective grew from an underlying assumption that there was a single, large, homogenous audience, a perspective that was congruent with the consensus approach to history in the postwar era. This fostered a research agenda focused on the dissemination of information, with an implicit assumption that all mediums of dissemination worked in much the same ways. Researchers only began to challenge assumptions about the uniformity of audience

reception in 1961, when a study isolated children's reactions to television, comparing children who watched television with those who didn't.[15] Soon after, Marshall McLuhan's *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964) challenged received wisdom about the uniform impact of various media and initiated a more nuanced understanding of electronic media's role in modern life.[16]

Since the late 1970s, contemporary mass media theory has emphasized reception analysis rather than textual analysis, insisting on both the polysemy of mass mediated discourses—an "open text" quality that allows for the possibility of various interpretations—and on the interpretive agency of viewers.[17] The recognition that texts are polysemic is grounded in a structural analysis of culture. Despite fears of the Frankfurt school theorists and others that popular culture was a hegemonic tool of capitalist dominance that would atrophy the will of an unthinking public, modern observers understand popular culture as a contested terrain in which various groups struggle to make meaning. As John Fiske reminds us, "Meaning is as much a site of struggle as is economics or party politics," and he identifies popular texts as arenas in

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[15] Wilbur Schram, Jack Lyle, and Edwin B. Parker, *Television in the Lives of Our Children* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961). For trajectory of media research , see J. Fred MacDonald, Michael T. Marsden, and Christopher D. Geist, "Radio and Television Studies and American Culture," *American Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (1980): 301-317.

[16] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

[17] See Klaus Bruhn Jensen, "Reception Analysis: Mass Communication as the Social Production of Meaning" in *A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research,* ed. Klaus Bruhn Jensen and Nicholas W. Jankowski (London: Routledge, 1991), 135-148; and MacDonald, Marsden, and Geist.

which various subordinated groups can reject, subvert, or modify the meanings imposed by dominant ideology.[18]

Psy Cartoons

Humor is particularly significant to the psychological community. Humor's propensity to reflect unacknowledged hostility and unconscious desires makes it especially resonant to psychological professionals. Additionally, since the effectiveness of a joke often hinges on multiple—and often conflicting—meanings, humor is a particularly fertile breeding ground for polysemy. Cartoon representations of psy professionals seem particularly compelling to the practitioners themselves, and inspired both cartoon collections and a handful of papers in the postwar era, often justified via lengthy discussions of Freud's *The Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious* and *Der Humor*.[19] These papers involved fairly informal descriptions and occasional reproductions of cartoons from popular periodicals. Although one author did not cite his source periodicals, the cited periodicals were generally middle- and upper-middle class publications*: The Saturday Evening Post, The New Yorker Magazine, Colliers,* and *The New York Herald-Tribune*. One noticeable shift occurred during the course of the 1950s; in the late 1940s, the cartoon psychiatrist typically seemed European, with a Freudian

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[18] John Fiske, "Television: Polysemy and Popularity," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 3, no. 4 (December 1986): 391-408.

[19] Cartoon-related publications and papers: Frederick C. Redlich, M.D., "The Psychiatrist in Caricature: An Analysis of Unconscious Attitudes Toward Psychiatry," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 20 no. 3 (July 1950): 560-571; Henry A. Davidson, unpublished presidential address to the New Jersey Neuropsychiatric Association, Newark, New Jersey, December 1, 1948; Davidson, "The Image of the Psychiatrist"; Michael Vertes, *It's All Mental* (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1948). Freud's works: Sigmund Freud, *The Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious* (New York: Moffat, Yard, 1916), first published in 1909, and "Der Humor," *Gesammelete Werke* Bd. 14 (London: Imago, 1948).

moustaches and goatee, a European-style frock coat, often a hooked nose, and sometimes a German-language diploma on display. By the early 1960s, the psychiatrist was visibly American, and the most consistent symbol of his profession was no longer his appearance, but his therapeutic couch. Despite this shift, the content of the cartoons stayed fairly constant.[20]

The cartoons parodied the psychiatrist in one of four ways: he (all samples in these papers portrayed male psychiatrists, despite, as one author pointed out, the comparatively large proportion of women in the actual field[21]) was either foolish and naïve, pompous, money-grubbing, or lecherous. Psychiatrist Henry M. Davidson offered an example of the foolish psy in a 1964 article for a psychiatric journal: "a moustached, empty-faced psychiatrist is sitting in his chair, making notes, his back to his patient, talking about kleptomania. The patient, meanwhile, is walking out of the door, carrying the couch."[22] This reflects a fairly popular view that the psychiatrist has his head in the clouds, and is so caught up in his own cerebral gymnastics that he fails to function effectively in the world.

Another example, again from Davidson, describes a "bearded, big-nosed, frock-coated doctor … telling the patient that head-shrinkers are Peruvian Indians, and that *he* is a psychiatrist, not a head shrinker." While that particular rendition may not seem particularly funny to modern sensibilities, it's clear that the professional was being inappropriately pompous and pedantic. It's also worth noting that, since "head shrinker"

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[20] Davidson.

[21] Redlich, "The Psychiatrist in Caricature."

was a slang term typically used by the nonprofessional classes, the psychiatrist was being both a psychiatric bully and, by reprimanding a patient for using colorful, idiomatic language, a class bully. Current working-class studies theorists identify the practice of correcting the less formal or nonstandard language of social "inferiors" as a form of class bullying.

The money-grubbing image of the psychiatrist, while fairly rare in cartoons running soon after World War II, became much more prevalent by 1960. An early cartoon shows a weeping woman saying, "My current depression started when I got your bill for curing the first depression."[23] A slight variation on the same theme has a young man holding a bill from his therapist and crying out, "But can't you see, Dr Friedrich, that these huge fees are only a childish attempt to build up your ego?"[24] This particular category of psy joke was very common by the 1950s, and continues to enjoy widespread circulation today. It speaks to the tension between helping patients and profiting from them, and probes the uncomfortable fact that, while most psy professionals belong to the financially comfortable professional/managerial class, most patients do not.

The last category of cartoon psychiatrist, the lecher, was quite common in the 1950s and 1960s,[25] but has fallen out of favor since second wave feminists convincingly demonstrated the sexist nature of both classical psychoanalysis and traditional adjustment therapy. A typical cartoon of this type shows a lovely, buxom patient on the therapist's

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[22] Davidson, 329.
[23] Ibid..
[24] Redlich, 563.

couch, talking intently, while a psychiatrist with a very wide smile takes notes—while lying on the couch next to her. In psychoanalytical terms, this type of cartoon reflects issues of transference, the process by which patients unconsciously project unresolved feelings and desires onto their therapists; and countertransference, therapists' (inappropriate) emotional response to transference. In lay terms, it reflects power imbalances in the patient/therapist relationship as well as the irony of a therapist's weak impulse control.

It's important to remember that these particular cartoon depictions of psy characters ran in *The Saturday Evening Post, The New Yorker Magazine, Colliers,* and *The New York Herald-Tribune*. They were created for and read by a middle- and upper-middle class audience. In the early postwar era, despite—or perhaps because of—the sudden popular diffusion of psychological concepts, a large number of the popular representations of psy professionals were negative. People in a variety of class positions were both intrigued by the new "science" of psychology and concerned about it. Fears of mind control, the longstanding American tendency toward anti-intellectualism, a lingering perception of psy as an elite affectation, the American preference for practicality over abstraction, and squeamishness over psychology's emphasis on sex combined to create widespread ambivalence over this new, rapidly expanding cultural force. As cultural theorists could have predicted, we can see that ambivalence most clearly in the polysemic texts of popular culture.

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[25] Interestingly, Davidson neither discusses this trope of cartoon nor provides examples of it. However, the Redlich article includes several examples, as do a number of magazines of the era.

Television: The Dominant Medium

Starting around 1948, television programming became increasingly popular with the American audience. Though only 0.4% of households owned television sets in 1948, by 1950—just two years later—9% did. The percentage almost tripled in the next year, and shot to 64.5% by 1956. By decade's end, 90% of American homes had a television set. And while early adopters tended to have high incomes, by the early 1950s many working- and middle-class families, particularly those with children, were buying sets of their own.[26] In addition to having a fairly heterogeneous class viewership, early television borrowed content from a wide swath of class-inflected entertainments. In addition to broadcasts of symphonies and old films, stations filled air time with variety shows that modeled themselves on lowbrow vaudeville traditions. And, early in the 1950s, the half-hour situation comedy became a television staple.[27]

Comedy itself is a class-inflected genre, creating humor by inverting official hierarchies and upending dominant values as in Bakhtin's description of the carnivalesque. In addition, early comedy variety shows generally featured hosts with identifiable working-class roots: Jackie Gleason, raised by a struggling widowed mother in Brooklyn; Milton Berle, son of a paint and varnish salesman; Sid Caesar, whose parents owned a 24-hour luncheonette in Yonkers; Queens native Don Rickles; and Red Skelton, the son of a circus clown who died before his son was born. Early situation comedies, too, portrayed working-class lives more often than they would after

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[26] James L. Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture: Journalism, Filmmaking, and Broadcasting in American since 1941* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 30, 41-42.

television's infancy.[28] *The Honeymooners'* Ralph Kramden was a bus driver with a thick Brooklyn accent living in a tiny, cold-water flat. The *Life of Riley* featured an Irish-American airplane riveter often frustrated with factory work and his own ill-fated attempts to improve his family's status. *I Remember Mama* portrayed a Scandinavian immigrant family, living (at the beginning of the series) in a tenement apartment, and *The Goldbergs* headlined a similarly situated poor Jewish family in a New York tenement.[29]

These working-class portrayals, however, were not necessarily sources of cultural pride for the working-class members of their audiences. Portrayals of working-class family life typically sketch the father as an incompetent buffoon (for example, Ralph Kramden in *The Honeymooners*, Chester A. Riley in *Life of Riley*, Fred Flintstone, and Archie Bunker) who must constantly be rescued by his more capable wife. In these series, according to sociologist and media scholar Richard Butsch, "Mother, not father, typically knows best." [30] According to Butsch, this trope is uncommon in sitcoms featuring middle-class heads of household in which either the wife is the harebrained partner (as in *I Love Lucy*), or both spouses are reasonably mature and responsible adults. However, we have evidence that this portrayal of working-class men as emasculated and ineffective was particularly offensive to working-class male audiences of the 1950s.

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[27] Baughman, 47-48.

[28] In one study of 262 domestic sitcoms broadcast between 1946 and 1990, only 11 featured blue-collar heads of household. When researchers included clerical, service, and agricultural workers, the total number of working-class fathers was still only 32, compared to 185 middle-class heads of household. Richard Butsch, "Class and Gender in Four Decades of Television Situation Comedy: Plus ça Change…," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 9 (1992): 387-399.

[29] *The Honeymooners* (CBS 1955-1956); *Life of Riley* (NBC 1949-1950 and 1953-1958); *I Remember Mama* (CBS 1949-1957); *The Goldbergs* (CBS 1949-1951, NBC 1952-1953), *Dumont* (1954-1955).

[30] Butsch, 3-6.

Sociologist Herbert J. Gans identified the ways in which the men in one working-class community made meaning out of television programs. He studied working-class Italian Americans in a recently condemned "slum" (he takes issue with the term) for seven months in 1957 and 1958. He lived in the neighborhood, the inner-city West End area of Boston, interacting with inhabitants and observing their behavior patterns, values, and worldviews. He found that male West Enders preferred television programs that reflected their own values, with virile, independent male characters who were loyal to their friends, moral, unpretentious, and unashamed of his humble roots. They disliked programming that valorized middle-class men, overly educated characters, and authority figures (particularly police) that failed to acknowledge working-class contributions and strengths, and they particularly disliked programming "in which the husband is shown as a weak or stupid pawn of his wife and children"—the most typical portrayal of working-class heads of household on television.[31] These men, Gans insisted, were not "frustrated seekers of middle-class values." They cultivated their own working-class values that reflected their particular position in the social and economic hierarchy. Further, Gans believed that class, not ethnicity, was at the core of these values, and he demonstrated that the West Enders' worldviews and way of life were similar to those of other working-class populations in significant ways.

By the end of the 1950s, representations of working-class characters, inadequate as they were in many ways, were on their way out. The variety shows featuring lowbrow

[31] Herbert J. Gans, *The Urban Villagers: Group and Class in the Life of Italian-Americans* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), 188-191.

humor were losing ratings and, as a result, contracts. The working-class sitcoms suffered similar fates: *The Honeymooners'* honeymoon was over, *The Life of Riley* had its plug pulled, and *Mama*'s family and *The Goldbergs,* along with an unprecedented number of upwardly mobile Americans, moved to houses in the suburbs. The move, however, could not ultimately save the shows. *The Goldbergs* disappeared in 1955,[32] *Mama* followed in 1957, and no new situation comedies featuring working-class characters were introduced between 1955 and 1971, rendering the working class largely invisible in mass media.

Working-class representations weren't the only content casualties of late 1950s; televised portrayals of social problems also dwindled during this period. Early television featured "anthology" programs, live theater plays broadcast for television audiences. The subject matter tended to be serious, the production values were high, and major sponsors often underwrote whole seasons of production. But despite the anthologies' critical success, sponsors began to fear that the weighty subject matter—racism, poverty, social conflicts—was incompatible with the happy, idealized world that sponsors portrayed in their commercials. Additionally, sponsors became concerned that the anthologies and variety shows were not formulaic (or, in economic terms, "rationalized") enough to build the kind of consistent audience that they assumed would maximize the return on their underwriting.[33] So from 1960 on, television programming increasingly relied on representational dramas and situation comedies that painted attractive, homogenous

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[32] Part of the reason for *The Goldbergs'* demise was the blacklisting of Philip Loeb, the actor who played Molly Goldberg's husband Jake. Harry Castleman and Walter J. Podrazik, *Watching Television: Six Decades of American Television* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003), 53-54.

[33] Ella Taylor, *Prime-Time Families: Television Culture in Postwar America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 22-23.

portraits of postwar prosperity overwhelmingly populated by middle-class WASPs in programs that one scholar has dubbed "fifties suburban domesticoms."[34] According to media studies scholar Michael V. Tueth, the networks had apparently decided that

> [T]he comfortable homes of middle-class suburban families—with their up-to-date kitchen appliances and laborsaving devices; the fashionable clothes, jewelry, and hairstyles; and the lawnmowers and automobiles in the garages—provided more appropriate environments for the sales pitches for those very products in the accompanying commercials.[35]

Psy Professionals on Television

But even as working-class characters disappeared from the small screen, another character was popping up everywhere. Psychiatrists had been shown on television since its earliest variety-show days. Sid Ceasar did a recurring shtick as a loony Viennese psychiatrist; Milton Berle's self-named character visited a psychiatrist in a sketch when he felt that the show had become too demanding; in an early episode, the title character of *I Love Lucy* pretended to need psychological help; her husband, discovering the ruse, produced a pretend "physiochiatrist." But by the early 1960s, psy professionals had become more than bit parts, evil mesmerists, and one-dimensional jokes. A number of psy professionals became main characters in regular series. Many of these new characters, however, reflected the negative aspects of psy that so concerned the postwar populace. While lechery was extremely rare (and never explicit) in 1950s television, the other three negative portrayals of psy professionals seen so often in cartoons—foolish,

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[34] David Marc, *Comic Visions: Television Comedy and American Culture* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), chapter 3. Marc also notes that most of these "domesticoms" began with an exterior shot of the family home, which "emphatically underscore[s] the family's unbearably secure upper-middle-class status."
[35] Michael V. Tueth, *Laughter in the Living Room: Television Comedy and the American Home Audience* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005), 108.

pompous, and greedy—were prevalent. Less prevalent but in evidence was the portrayal of the evil psy professional that had been developed earlier in literature and film.

Some, like the inimitable Dr. Zachary Smith character on the hit CBS series *Lost in Space* (1965-1968), managed to combine all four unpleasant personas.[36] Colonel (Dr.) Smith was the show's undisputed villain. Although he was the United States Space Corp's staff psychologist, he had stowed away on the Robinsons' space ship to sabotage their mission at the behest of an unnamed foreign power. Early in the series, he was characterized as evil and selfish, but in later seasons, the writers reworked his character. They minimized his evil qualities, and instead developed his self-absorption, laziness, and ineptitude as comedic tropes. Still, at the end of the rewrite, Dr. Smith's psychiatrist character was an unappealing individual. Another unappealing psychiatrist character served as a primary plot foil on *I Dream of Jeannie* (1965-1970). The character of Dr. Alfred Bellows, NASA's staff psychiatrist, created dramatic tension for the sitcom by insisting to NASA brass that there was something wrong with or suspicious about the show's protagonist, Tony Nelson. These programs were visibly middle-class: the characters generally lived in middle-class suburban homes, dressed professionally, and spoke well-modulated, standard English. The shows offered arenas in which viewers could grapple with their ambivalence about science, gender, nationalism, professionalism, and psychology. However, the issue of class simply was not on the

[36] Mark Philips and Frank Garcia, *Science Fiction Television Series: Episode Guides, Histories, and Casts and Credits for 62 Prime Time Shows, 1959 through 1989* (Jefferson NC: McFarland, 1996).

agenda in these programs. The mass-mediated erasure of the working class, Seguin's "middle-classlessness," was well underway.[37]

The Beverly Hillbillies

It was into this disproportionately middle-class televisual world that a new sitcom, *The Beverly Hillbillies*, debuted in September of 1962. The *Hillbillies* is a screwball comedy about a group of irrepressible, dirt-poor, backwoods cabin-dwellers who strike oil and relocate with rusty truck, moonshine still, and hound dog in tow, to the posh environs of their new Beverly Hills mansion. This program is, for several reasons, an ideal vehicle through which to examine popular, class-inflected representations of psychiatry. First, it was enormously popular, dramatically outperforming its competitors and holding an unusually high percentage of the television audience. It was the first of what Janet Staiger calls "blockbuster sitcoms," or network-era serial comedies that garnered significantly higher ratings than the competition for weeks on end. Thirty-six percent of American televisions were tuned to the *Hillbillies* during its first broadcast season, beating both competitors, *Candid Camera* and *The Red Skelton* show, by 4.9 percent. And it had staying power—until its last season on the air in 1971, throughout a nine-year run, the *Hillbillies* ratings kept it in the top 25 programs.[38] Clearly, the program offered something compelling to diverse audiences.

Additionally, the *Hillbillies'* basic narrative premise involves a clash of class positions and values. While ostensibly not about class at all—the show's focus is on the

[37] Seguin.

backwoods, pre-modern nature of the hillbillies and the resulting miscommunications with their new sophisticated, urban neighbors—the series is, as communications theorist Paul Attallah has illustrated, all about class. According to Attallah, the show "mobilizes a discourse on class" by creating characters with distinctly incompatible worldviews and values that reflect class stereotypes.[39] The rich, greedy banker is lampooned for his transparent avarice and lack of human kindness; his snobbish, cultured wife is skewered for her pretensions; and the unsophisticated Clampetts are frequently spoofed for their lack of culture, their nonstandard speech patterns, their inability and refusal to use their wealth for appropriate status display. Interestingly, while a large portion of the public loved the program, reviewers hated it, finding it offensively lowbrow. Their evaluations of the program included "mindless" and "stupid," and one UPI correspondent wrote: "The series aimed low and hit its target."[40] While viewers can read the *Hillbillies* as foregrounding rural/urban tensions, the emphasis on wealth, status, and the juxtaposition of proper and improper social actions also strongly correspond to a class interpretation.

The final factor that positions the Hillbillies so favorably for this project is that psychiatry is a recurring theme in the series. The pilot ends with Mr. Drysdale, the banker, narrating the story of the Clampetts moving in, with all of the attendant misperceptions, cross-communications, and confusion. As the camera pulls back from a closeup to a wider shot, it becomes evident that Drysdale is actually telling the story to

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[38] Janet Staiger, *Blockbuster TV: Must-See Sitcoms in the Network Era* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 9, 15-16, 80.
[39] Paul Attallah, *Situation Comedy and the Beverly Hillbillies: The Unworthy Discourse* (Montreal, Quebec: McGill University, 1983), 29.

his therapist. Both Drysdales apparently have standing appointments with this practitioner, and there are indications that Mrs. Drysdale's prized poodle also visits an analyst regularly. Significantly, two episodes from the second season center around a psychiatrist and his interactions with the Clampett clan, and those two episodes provide a rich source of material for closer analysis.

"The Psychiatrist Gets Clampetted" and "The Clampetts Get Psychoanalyzed"

Both of the psychiatry episodes feature the familiar *Hillbillies* theme of cultural misunderstanding. In "The Psychiatrist Gets Clampetted," nephew Jethro, a strapping, college-aged sixth-grader, needs a certificate of health from a doctor to continue at school. The Clampetts don't know any doctors in Beverly Hills—in fact, Granny, who is exceptionally proud of her own home-grown doctoring abilities, has always tended to the family's medical needs in the past. But Jethro remembers the name of a doctor who the imperious Mrs. Drysdale, their banker's (and next-door neighbor's) wife, has been seeing for seven years, and he makes an appointment. The audience discovers that Dr. Twombly is a psychiatrist, but neither Jethro nor any of the other Clampetts know what a psychiatrist is, and Dr. Twombly, for his part, never seems to understand the mistake they've made. Jethro misinterprets the doctor's psychoanalytic questions about his mother as romantic interest, and tells her, after his session, that the doctor wants to see her, "the sooner, the better."

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[40] Arnold Hano, "The G. A. P. Loves the Hillbillies," *The New York Times Magazine*, 17 November 1963, 30+.

Our first view of the representation of "psychiatrist" in this episode reinforces mainstream ideas about a psychiatrist's status and professionalism. We see his diploma framed on the wall; we read his dark, well-tailored suit, expensive haircut, and classic good looks as signifiers of his professional status, especially in contrast to the patient in the introductory scene, who is wearing a lighter, less well tailored suit, a shiny tie-pin, and a too-short, military-style haircut. The patient is not classically handsome; in addition, he smiles too much and calls Dr. Twombly "sir." Twombly solidifies his dominance in the scene by looking at his watch and announcing, "Your analysis is progressing most satisfactorily. Tomorrow same time." They rise. The patient is smiling and grateful, and Twombly is professional and a bit distracted as he writes in his notebook, adding, "And don't worry about the regression into infancy syndrome. You'll overcome this desire to be a baby again." The punch "line" is a visual gag: the smiling patient pulls a frilly, oversized baby's bonnet and a pacifier from inside his suit jacket, pulls the bonnet on his head, puts the pacifier in his mouth, and, smiling, walks out of the office.

The joke, of course, resides both in the visual image of a grown man in a frilly bonnet and pacifier and in the fact that the seemingly infallible doctor is wrong. Additionally, different viewers will undoubtedly locate the humor in different ways. Twombly's reaction is important. He stops writing in his appointment book, turns to face the patient, and loses the small social smile he'd had on his face. The screen cuts to a close-up showing an intensity that is supposed to indicate surprise contained into a

professional impassivity. He was wrong, but he's still a professional, and his dignity is intact. The psy professional has not, at this point, been discredited.

Jethro, whose dimwittedness is a stock *Hillbillies* joke, admits under the doctor's questioning that he has a problem staying awake in school while the teacher is talking. This information causes Twombly to expound on psychological theory in a decidedly professorial manner. He begins slowly; "Well that may be nothing more than a benign rejection of authority represented by the teacher." As he speaks, he becomes more intent, looking away from Jethro and lecturing with an alert, pleased, focused look on face. "It doesn't mean that you necessarily lack interest or capability or intelligence. Above all," and here he raises his finger to emphasize a point, "you mustn't let this cause you any distress." At this point Twombly smiles, lecturing to his imaginary audience, looking off into the distance, and gesturing with his pencil like a pointer. He continues: "Together we will probe into the underlying causations, and…"

The punch line this time is the sound of a snore, coming, as the audience quickly learns, from Jethro, who has fallen asleep on the couch. The laugh track plays over the image of Jethro sleeping; he looks foolish. Falling asleep in public is unacceptable as proper, middle-class behavior. The camera cuts to Twombly's surprised face, and another layer of laugh track plays. The joke, again, is multivalent: it is both that Jethro cannot stay conscious like a normal, respectable, middle-class person, and it that the doctor's self-absorbed eggheadedness led him to be unaware of his actual situation. The joke is on the underperforming hick and the joke is on the overbearing intellectual.

The main conceit of this episode is that the doctor's professional intentions are mistaken by Jethro's mother, Aunt Pearl, for romantic intentions. For most of the episode, the joke is on her; she is overeager to find a beau in Beverly Hills; she is pretentious, introducing herself to the doctor with horribly mangled pseudo French ("Bawn joor, sil voo plate, I'm sure"), and she is ridiculous in her pretensions, arriving in the professional's office in a floor-length, excessively spangled evening gown, long black gloves, a large fur stole, and overly large and overly fussy crystal earrings. She is also the butt of the joke in her naiveté about the doctor's procedures and in her mistaken impression that he is not only interested in her romantically, but is being too fresh. The audience has seen Dr. Twombly prepare for clients earlier in the episode. He invariably dims the light on his desk and draws the curtains closed over the window to prepare for analysis. However, Aunt Pearl watches the doctor's preparations with growing unease, believing that he is trying to seduce her. When the doctor tries to help her lie back on the couch to begin the session, she drops her exaggeratedly genteel pretensions and wallops him in the stomach, then storms out of the office.

However, Aunt Pearl's foolishness is contained in the broader narrative of the episode in several ways. Her foolishness is a gender-based foolishness borne of vanity, not entirely a class- (or sophistication-) based foolishness. Additionally, the doctor, the representative of both urbanity and a privileged class, becomes foolish himself. He visits the Clampett mansion, ostensibly to "apologize for the mistaken impression," but with an ulterior motive of more closely observing the unusual specimens of humanity there. He begins his visit suave, self-assured, and unflappable. When Granny, still jealous of

anyone else being designated "doctor," grills him on folk ailments and remedies, he holds his own at first.

Granny begins belligerently. "So. You call yourself a doctor, do you?"

Dr. Twombly answers smoothly: "Well, I do hold several degrees."

Granny: "All right, doctor." She stalks around the kitchen table where he's seated, strutting like a banty rooster, then suddenly squats down next to him to ask her question abruptly and in close face-to-face range: "How do you cure warts?"

Dr. Twombly is unfazed. "Warts? Well, dermatology isn't my field, but I assume electrodessication is still the preferred method."

Granny, unimpressed, makes an emphatic, disgusted noise. "Aaah."

Dr. Twombly remains unperturbed: "Oh, is there a newer method?"

Granny: "Stump water and lye mixed with ground-up crawdad tails, daubed on with the leg bone of a buzzard, just before the moon comes up. Think you can remember that?"

Dr. Twombly smiles at Granny indulgently, and replies pleasantly, "Well, I'll try."

But despite Dr. Twombly's ability to maintain his professional superiority under Granny's goading, the unpredictable nature of interactions at the Clampett house begin to fray the doctor's composure. He expresses interest in daughter Ellie May's jaguar, assuming that it is a car. Ellie May's jaguar, however, is actually an infant *panthera onca*, and her promise to bring it in the house so that he can see it confuses the doctor severely and comically. His persona shifts from competent professional to confused naïf; he looks dazed, takes a seat, shakes his head as if to clear it and actually taps it with the side of his palm in an exaggerated pantomime of confusion. When Aunt Pearl enters the scene to

forgive him and allow him to court her at roughly the same time that Jethro confesses that he tried to inflate a car tire by mouth and, forgetting his own strength, accidentally exploded the tire, the doctor has completely morphed into the misfit who is unable to cope with the environment. He is, technically, playing the "straight man" to the Clampetts' clown acts, but he does so in an unprofessional, ineffective, thoroughly befuddled way. The scene ends as he slumps his shoulders, dashes to the door, and quips, "Well, good-bye, folks. It's been weird!" His professionalism could not stand up to the Clampetts' simple, down-home wackiness, a wackiness that the audience knows is harmless and enjoyable.

Further, the real hero of the episode—as of every episode—is Jed, the folk-talking, shotgun-toting paterfamilias with the extremely moth-eaten hat. Despite his 25 million, Jed is clearly a working-class figure; he is plain-talking, hard-working, loyal, and unpretentious. But, unlike other televisual working-class heads of household, Jed is not portrayed as inept or foolish. He certainly makes mistakes, all of which involve the difficulty of cross-cultural understanding. But Jed is the program's moral character; he is wise, compassionate, and forgiving, but he articulates and expects adherence to high moral standards that the rest of the characters often have trouble with. It was Jed who, though mistakenly, journeyed to Dr. Twombly's office to uphold the honor of his "blood kin." He was honorable and straightforward in his mission; he politely suggested that the nurse might want to leave the room, because his moral code forbids frightening women. He declined to shake Dr. Twombly's hand, refusing a gesture of goodwill that would have been false, but he refused politely and with dignity: "Before I shake your hand

maybe I'd better speak my piece." He even offers gruff but apparently sincere advice for what he interprets as Dr. Twombly's problem. Told of Pearl's accusation that he "commenced pullin' her to the settee," Dr. Twombly replies, "Mr. Clampett, you don't understand. I do this every day. I'm a psychiatrist." Jed, still unfamiliar with the word, muses, "Well I'd try to get cured of that if I was you, or else you're liable to wind up bad hurt."

Conclusions

As actual psychological professionals gained visibility and influence in the public sphere, their fictional counterparts became more prevalent in various popular culture media. Psy professionals regularly appeared in books, cartoons, film, and radio. With some exceptions, however, the portrayals were not flattering. Fictional psychological practitioners were, variously, evil, manipulative, pompous, greedy, unethical, foolish, naïve, lecherous, or deeply disturbed themselves. These portrayals suggest deep ambivalence about the project of psychology and its increasing influence on American lives. Additionally, these negative portrayals occur in all types of media, from elite literature to lowbrow television. It is notable, though, that the more literary work typically featured psychological professionals who were neither bumbling nor evil, but who weren't as perceptive as they imagined themselves to be. If, as Pfister suggests, self-aware psychological interiority was a kind of cultural currency among the educated classes, perhaps the literary writers—and readers—preferred their protagonists to be more perceptive than their psychological practitioners. Since readers generally identify more closely with protagonists, insightful protagonists offer readers the positive emotional

rewards of being the “knowing” one, rather than the subordinated position of being the “known.”

Chapter Four. Psychology in the "Sweats": Men's Adventure Magazines

As postwar audiences sat in front of their black-and-white television sets, they found increasingly homogenous programming. Despite some casting differences, *Leave It to Beaver, Father Knows Best,* and *My Three Sons* provided relatively interchangeable fare. Mid-century Americans witnessed the development of a homogenous, mass-mediated popular culture aimed at a national audience, while specifically working-class media representations dwindled. However, there was a late-blooming holdout; a little-remembered but popular print genre known as "men's adventure magazines" entertained working-class male readers for two decades.

If postwar psychology unwittingly promoted middle-class normativity, how did members of the working classes perceive a psychology that framed them as non-normative? This chapter approaches that question by examining how a particular working-class medium navigated psychological ideas in the postwar period. Men's adventure magazines, known in the trade as "armpit slicks," "men's sweat magazines," or "the sweats," were widely popular in the 1950s. Aimed at working-class white men, sweats were the direct descendants of the earlier pulps, though printed in a larger format and on more expensive paper to appeal to the newly affluent working-class reader. Between their heyday in the 1950s and their swan song in the 1970s, more than 100 titles, such as *Real, True, Bold Men*, and *Rugged,* regaled readers with tales of danger and heroism. In addition, they, like mainstream American periodicals, wrote about the "new" phenomenon of psychology. But while the middle-class *Newsweek* advocated "fine tuning" one's emotions and *Life* declared the 1950s the "Age of Psychology," the sweats

took a different approach, framing psychology as either sexy, threatening, or absolutely frightening.

To fully explore the classed nature of the sweats, this chapter first examines the genre itself, tracing the cultural forces that shaped its development as well as the ways in which the sweats and their readers differed from the increasingly homogenous mass culture of the postwar era. The classed location of this readership manifested itself in both the economic and cultural realms: economically, the sweats were clearly targeting their appeals to a different audience than the one celebrated in the many discussions of postwar prosperity. The pages of men's adventure magazines hawked bargains, commiserated with tight budgets, and expressed the fears and cautions of the economic underdog, while the rest of the country was diving into the postwar love affair with consumer culture. Culturally, the sweats reflected concerns, pleasures, and identities that had developed separately from—and sometimes in opposition to—those of the mainstream culture. For example, while mainstream periodicals in the 1950s focused on achieving and enjoying "the good life," the sweats emphasized being aware of and avoiding life's many dangers. And, significantly, the concept of masculinity reflected in the sweats was not the same masculinity extolled by the growing middle classes.

Amidst the broader consolidation of heterogeneous popular culture during the 1950s, men's adventure magazines offer a counterhegemonic perspective. These magazines demonstrate evidence of a struggle over the meanings of masculinity, the good life, relationships with women, and the newly influential profession of psychology. I do not suggest that every reader who browsed through a copy of *Man's World* or *Adventure*

read in opposition to mainstream culture. The sweats reflected many aspects of that mainstream culture: the desire for affluence, patriotism, traditional gender roles. But the sweats also reflected a view of the world that was not consistent with mainstream, middle-class tastes. This chapter teases out not only how working-class readers made sense of the world through the sweats, but also how they made sense of—and use of—the increasingly ubiquitous norms of psychology.[1]

"Mass" Culture in the 1950s

The 1950s witnessed the development of homogeneity in popular culture. Ethnic and foreign-language newspapers, theaters, and social halls gave way to standardized commercial leisure pursuits. Like much other production in postwar America, the production of popular culture became more centralized, while at the same time technological advances dramatically expanded media's distribution capabilities. Network radio, then television, constructed a fictionalized vision of America that minimized or erased regional, ethnic, and class differences. Tracing the various aspects of this national culture, Roland Marchand identifies an increasing sameness in food, clothing, housing, furniture, and the architecture and offerings of the rapidly expanding franchised chain businesses. Marchand concludes that "[t]he postwar period saw the emergence of a popular culture more homogenous than Americans had previously known."[2]

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[1] The Changing Men Collection, Special Collections, Michigan State University Libraries.

[2] Roland Marchand, "Visions of Classlessness, Quests for Dominion: American Popular Culture, 1945-1960," in *Reshaping America: Society and Institutions, 1945-1960,* ed. Robert H. Brenner and Gary W. Reichard (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State Univ. Press, 1982), 163-182; 164.

Evidence of this homogeneity was seen in the magazine industry as well. Some of the larger magazines experienced circulation increases during World War II, even amid paper shortages. After the war, the numbers of mass circulation magazines skyrocketed. Partly in an attempt to compete with television for advertising dollars, mainstream magazines such as *Readers' Digest, Saturday Evening Post, Life, Look*, and *McCall's* cast wide nets for a broader share of readers. Most of these leaders lowered their subscription prices to foster larger circulations and, consequently, greater appeal to advertisers. A number of factors combined to increase magazine circulations: unprecedented postwar affluence, the spike in postwar college enrollment, and an expansion of many Americans' leisure time. Between the end of World War II and the early 1960s, the news magazines doubled their combined circulations, and a handful of other mass circulation magazines almost doubled theirs as well. By 1959, more than 80 percent of American households were magazine buyers.[3]

Antecedents of Men's Adventure Magazines

As postwar America witnessed the development of a homogenous, mass-mediated popular culture aimed at a national audience, working-class media representations dwindled. Working-class situation comedies such as *The Honeymooners, The Life of Riley, Mama's Family,* and *The Goldbergs* gave way to the middle-class homogeneity of *Leave It to Beaver* and *Father Knows Best*. Similarly, postwar mass-circulation magazines positioned themselves for the largest possible market by reflecting affluent

[3] Theodore Peterson, *Magazines in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana, Ill.: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1964), 45, 47-48, 54.

images of postwar prosperity. However, there was a late-blooming holdout; a little-remembered but popular genre known as "men's adventure magazines" entertained working-class male readers for two decades. These men's adventure magazines had two primary ancestors: the pulps and the "true" stories popularized by Bernarr Macfadden.

Pulp magazines, named after the cheap paper they were printed on, had themselves descended from nineteenth century dime novels. Popular from the 1920s through the 1940s, pulps were smaller than contemporary magazines, at seven inches by ten inches. The covers typically featured brightly colored illustrations of partially dressed, imperiled women and dangerous-looking men, but the magazines' interiors were filled with columns of text interrupted by infrequent pen-and-ink line drawings. Pulp fiction was aimed at the working class, and the content of the pulps was procured cheaply: stories earned three or four cents a word in the 1920s, and only a penny a word during the Depression era. While the writing was by no means always good, there were pleasant surprises. Notable authors including Ray Bradbury, Raymond Chandler, and Dashiell Hammett wrote for the pulps. However, pulps had little advertising revenue and needed to survive on circulation income. Rising costs during World War II and its aftermath hurt the industry, as did the fact that the more affluent postwar populace was lured away by the more upscale slick magazines such as *Life, Look, Sports Illustrated,* and *Playboy*. By the end of the 1940s, the pulp genre was dead.[4]

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[4] Erin A. Smith, *Hard-Boiled: Working-Class Readers and Pulp Magazines* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000), 18-19, 34-35; and Peterson, 306-309.

While the pulps prefigured the sweats in terms of intended audience, economics of production, and sexualized "damsel in distress" motif, the two genres were not identical. Physically they were dissimilar, as the pulps were smaller and their paper was grainier (though a few sweats kept the rough "pulp" paper as well). Their content was different too: while pulp magazines published fictional stories, the sweats' formula was a fictionalized realism. They ran ostensibly "true" accounts of real-life adventures, "journalistic" exposes, and "historical" reports. Additionally, and in keeping with the realistic motif of the sweats, they used photographs as well as drawings to illustrate stories, whereas pulps could not, because the poor quality of pulp paper did not reproduce photos clearly.

In many ways, the controversial fitness and publishing impresario Bernarr Macfadden was the progenitor of the men's adventure genre. Macfadden was born in 1868 as Bernard McFadden, a sickly and impoverished child who found health, his calling, and eventually fame and fortune through bodybuilding. To spread the gospel of fitness, he took over publication of *Physical Culture* magazine in 1899, increasing its circulation from 3,000 to 100,000 in just two years.[5] *Physical Culture* foreshadowed some aspects of the sweats: the publication regularly displayed scantily clad women's bodies, prompting charges of lewdness and obscenity on more than one occasion. *Physical Culture* also foreshadowed the "reality"-based regularly including testimonials about how physical culture had changed readers' lives. A second publication, debuting in

[5] Harvey Green, *Fit for America: Health, Fitness, Sport, and American Society* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 242-245.

1919, continued to solicit reader' experiences. *True Story* developed the "confessional" genre, paired it with staged photos, and became wildly successful, earning more than $3 million in advertising revenues by 1922.[6] However, the working-class readers who made *True Story* so successful were not attractive to mainstream advertisers. According to the American Studies scholar Ann Fabian,

> Lurid tales of seduction and redemption sold magazines, but they did not provide the right atmosphere for the products of an advertising profession searching for professional respectability. Until the late 1920s advertisements followed strict class lines, and it is hard to find evidence of the middle-class world of cars, insurance policies, prepared foods, and cleaning products in *True Story*. Ads for mail-order courses, exercisers, weight reducers, quick cures, and for Macfadden's own schemes and books continued to appear on the pages of his confession magazines.[7]

Macfadden went on to launch other ostensibly nonfiction magazines targeted to male audiences; *True Detective Mysteries* came out in 1924, and *Red Blooded Stories* (reconfigured as *Tales of Danger and Daring* after five issues) was published in 1928. Three years later, inspired by Macfadden's masculine offerings as well as a readership study indicating that male readers preferred factual fare to fiction, an editor at Fawcett Publications by the name of Ralph Daigh pitched the idea of a new nonfiction men's magazine to his publisher. He apparently didn't convince his publisher to launch a new genre in those early days of the Depression, but in 1937, Daigh and Fawcett introduced not one but two men's nonfiction magazines: a pocket-sized *For Men* and a "sensational" photo magazine titled *True*.[8]

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[6] Ann Fabian, "Making a Commodity of Truth: Speculations on the Career of Bernarr Macfadden," *American Literary History*, 5, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 51-76; *True Story* advertising revenues on 59.
[7] Ibid., 66.
[8] Peterson, 311-312, and Steven Heller, "Blood, Sweat, and Tits: A History of Men's Adventure Magazines," in *Men's Adventure Magazines in Postwar America*, ed. Max Allen Collins and George Hagenauer (Köln: Taschen, 2004), 6-19; Daigh on 9.

According to *New York Times* art director Steven Heller, the early *True* was "racy," "grisly," and "lurid;" the early covers also frequently featured bondage imagery. Heller claims that "bare breasts, sex, and violence" propelled the magazine's monthly circulation to 250,000.[9] Unfortunately, by the early 1940s, the breasts, sex and violence had also caught the attention of the new Postmaster General, Frank Walker. A Catholic, Walker was heavily influenced by the Church's decency crusade, which had inspired the American bishops to found the League of Decency in 1934 and the National Office for Decent Literature in 1938. Between 1942 and 1943, Walker declared more than twenty men's magazines obscene and revoked their second-class mailing privileges. Soon after, the publishers of *True* and its closest competitor, *Argosy*, completely reformatted their magazines. Instead of Peterson's "gradual metamorphosis," *True* became inoffensive overnight. Heller described the transition: "Gone were the lurid headlines, rapacious Jap soldiers, and cowering bound women. In their place were such harbingers of the sedate fifties as older men fishing and pretty young women in Women's Army Corps uniforms."[10] Instead of maidens in bondage, the March 1945 *True* featured a close-up of a brown-and-white pointer—a hunting dog—on its cover.

Financially, the makeover worked. A laudatory 1948 *Time* article pointed out that in its six years as a "sexy, fact-detective pulp," *True* had 240,000 readers and was "barely making carfare." However, once it became respectable, readership shot up. By the publication of the *Time* article, *True'*s circulation was at one and a half million; over the next decade, it reached two million. Not everyone, however, was impressed. Writing in

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[9] Heller, 10-11. A 1948 *Time* magazine article puts the circulation at 240,000. "Good Man & True," *Time* 19 April 1948. Online: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,798402,00.html>.
[10] Heller, 13.

2003, a journalist dismissed *True*'s popularity:

> Everyone knew why Fawcett Publications' *True* commanded a massive two million copy circulation. Its inoffensive emphasis on mild recreation and dogs and sweaters made for family-sanctified barbershop reading and the safe and proper gift of wives, who could rely on True accommodating husbands without arousing them with photo-spreads of comely hoores [sic] or suggestive lip-smacking articles.[11]

In fact, while Peterson classes the later, reformed *True* in the men's adventure magazine genre, neither of the two recent men's adventure retrospectives agree.

Postwar Men's Adventure Magazines

The early incarnations of *True* and *Argosy* notwithstanding, the postwar men's adventure genre was launched in 1949 when a low-end comic book and pulp fiction publisher named Martin Goodman wondered if returning GIs would be interested in a men's adventure tabloid. They were. Within a year, Goodman's title, *Stag,* was joined by a competitor—Macfadden Publications' *Saga*—then *Male, Men,* and *Man's Magazine*.[12] Two years later, there were 11 titles in the "sweats." By the height of the genre's popularity in the late 1950s, more than one hundred publications followed the men's adventure format. The genre's titles leaned towards the ruggedly masculine (including *Rugged Men*), and often included variations on the words "man" and "male": *Bold Men* and *Challenge for Men* competed with *Man's Action, Man's Adventure, Man's Conquest*, and *Man's Daring*.

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[11] Adam Parfrey, "From Pulp to Posterity: The Origins of Men's Adventure Magazines," in *It's a Man's World: Men's Adventure Magazines, The Postwar Pulps*, ed. Adam Parfrey (Los Angeles: Feral House, 2003), 7.

[12] Goodman had initially published a *Stag* title in 1941, hoping to copy the upscale success of 1933's *Esquire* launch. Misled by a conniving editor into unknowingly recycling literary work without the authors' consent, Goodman ended up with a federal injunction to stop publication. After the war, Goodman recycled the *Stag* name into his new publication. See Heller, 11-13.

Many titles, such as *Climax* and *Stag,* sound explicitly sexual to the modern ear. Others, such as *Guy: True Adventures* and *Impact: Bold True Action for Men,* translate awkwardly into twenty-first century lexicons. Similarly, the stridently homosocial masculinity, the exaggerated manliness, is—to our era—a homoerotic manliness. As Adam Parfrey, the editor of a recent compilation of men's adventure art, acknowledged, "Most heterosexuals today would not be comfortable purchasing a magazine illustrating the adventures of manly men. Male interest in male things is no longer sanctioned for straight audiences, particularly in the form of a magazine, outside of professional sports."[13] While that assessment is generally accurate, it should be added that even today, expectations of heterosociality are classed; middle and upper-middle class men are expected to be heterosocial, while a stronger tradition of homosociality exists in the working classes.

But these magazines clearly tapped a receptive vein in their contemporary readers. While the men's adventure genre never enjoyed the broad audiences of the middle-class, mass-circulation magazines—or even the readership numbers of the sanitized *True*—a few of the sweats developed monthly circulations as high as 500,000.[14] Amid postwar affluence, most of the sweats were slick publications, printed on higher-quality paper than the few remaining pulp-paper magazines, and within a few years, virtually all had adopted the standard magazine size of eight and a half by eleven inches.

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[13] Parfrey, 7.

[14] For the development of the genre, see Heller, 13-16. For circulation, see Parfrey, 281-287. With the exception of *True,* which was an anomaly both because it was a "respectable," domesticated version of the men's adventure genre and because of its million-plus circulation numbers, the highest circulation cited by Parfrey was *Stag*'s 1960 record of 471,702.

Readership and Advertising

Like the pulps before them, the sweats targeted a working-class readership. Heller positions the sweats as part of the "dark side" of postwar culture, when

> [t]he heroes who beat Hitler and Hirohito came back home to a period of difficult adjustment—a postwar economy that initially had few jobs and a shortage of housing. Many went from their courageous battle to save democracy to unemployment or repetitive, blue-collar manufacturing or service jobs. As horrific as the war was, for many it would be their greatest adventure.[15]

And like the pulps, the sweats featured distinctly working-class advertisements. Erin Smith outlines the cultural function of advertisements aimed at working-class readers of the hard-boiled detective pulps popular from the 1920s through the 1940s. Arguing that by the 1920s, the expansion of consumer culture, the advent of women's suffrage, and the rapid decline of skilled, autonomous labor had combined to make men anxious about gender norms, Smith suggests that the pulp advertisements worked to mediate those stresses. She describes ads that helped working-class men navigate the new consumer culture by adopting strategies of impression management that were more typically associated with the middle classes; ads that promised upward mobility through job training, self improvement, and accessible education; and ads that offered to reinforce readers' sense of masculinity through body-building courses, sporting purchases, and weaponry.[16]

Similar advertising messages existed in the postwar men's adventure magazines. Almost always in black and white, ads in the sweats hawked job training, muscle building, sex manuals, and trusses. There were some differences: while the pulps printed

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[15] Heller, p. 8.
[16] Smith, chapter 2, "The Adman on the Shop Floor."

several small ads on the same page, and clustered ad pages in the front and back of each issue, most sweats included full-page ads throughout, in addition to the smaller clusters. But much of the advertising message was the same, as a single 1955 issue of *Man's Life* illustrates. It includes practical pitches for working men, such as one small box, three and a half by two inches, that addressed the reader directly: "Save 75% on Work Clothes!" The ad featured a small pen-and-ink drawing of a folded button-up shirt, with a description of the bargain underneath, reading, "SHIRTS 79¢ What a buy! 4 for the price of one! These shirts, though used, are washed, sterilized and ready for long, tough wear. In blue or tan. Send name, address, neck size." The ad also offered "COVERALLS … wear 'em used and save plenty," noting that although they had originally sold for $5.95, the Galco Sales Co. sold used pairs for $1.95.[17]

The *Man's Life* reader urged to buy used clothing for "long, tough wear" seems to inhabit a completely different country than the one described in an exuberant *Time* magazine article published early the next year. The unnamed writer seems positively intoxicated by the signs of unprecedented American prosperity. The article is worth quoting at length:

> By virtually every measure, 1955 showed the flowering of American capitalism. ... Across the land the signs of limitless bounty were evident. … With full employment and soaring paychecks, the U.S. had more money to spend ($303 billion) and spent more of it ($250 billion) than ever before. Savings tumbled to the lowest in five years ($16 billion) as confident consumers denied themselves nothing. In 1955 they bought: 1,330,000 new homes … 7,250,000 new cars, [and]]7,600,000 new TV sets, 200,000 better than record 1950. … As a frosting on the cake, some 300 U.S. companies in 1955 had stock purchase plans involving 2,000,000 U.S. workers. Many another low-salaried worker went out and bought

[17] Galco Sales Co. work clothes advertisement, *Man's Life* 3, no. 3 (March 1955), 78.

stock on his own.[18]

The article continued in the celebratory vein for pages, painting a picture of a very different America than the one experienced by Galco's customers. While mainstream media extolled the virtues of the new and prosperous economy, the sweats hawked bargains and warned readers against throwing away money on scams that seemed too good to be true.

Automobile advertising provides a perfect example of the gap between the postwar prosperity of the middle class and the economic doldrums of the sweats readers. Mainstream advertising glamorized cars in the 1950s; the ads were shot from low angles to make the enormous cars seem even larger than they were. One observer of the advertising industry noted that "[c]ars were designed and advertised to resemble the exciting hardware of the cold war: streamlined, finned like airplanes, fitted with elaborate-looking controls, decorated with flashing chrome." The same observer quoted the text of a 1961 Buick ad that embodies the smugness of affluence: "What a wonderful sense of well-being just being *seen* behind its wheel. No showing off. Just that Clean Look of Action which unmistakably tells your success." [19]

In contrast, the same 1955 *Man's Life* issue addressed automobiles four times. Two of those discussions were in articles; one article warned readers about the tricks and deceptions common in the used-car trade; the target reader of *Man's Life* was not likely to buy that 1961 Buick new. Another expose shed humorous light on the challenges of

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[18] "California's Gain Was Once the East's Loss, but 1955's Economy Was Big Enough for Everyone," *Time* 9 January 1958. Online: <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,866744,00.html>.

being in the automobile repossession business, or, as the headline described it, "King of the Car Snatchers." The piece was written in the manner of a hard-boiled detective novel, and detailed the cleverness necessary to outfox the "deadbeats."[20]

The third mention of automobiles in the issue was an advertisement, but it had little in common with the exciting cold war hardware of postwar cars, or with Buick's "wonderful sense of well-being." The full-page, black-and-white ad featured the small image of a 1940s-era auto, which would have been at least ten years old at the time. "Car Lost It's Pep?" the ad asked. "Burning oil?" For only $2.98—a bargain, down from the regular $4.45—the reader could buy a PEPGO Ring Seal and avoid a hundred-dollar engine overhaul. This ad also indicates a readership that was excluded from the postwar economic boom.[21] While most historians have characterized the 1950s as a time of unprecedented affluence, these advertisements indicate that the affluence was by no means universal.

The last inclusion of automobiles in the issue, another full-page ad, gives the bleakest evidence of readers' financial straits. Its headline warns against the high price of car repair: "Don't Be 'Buffalo-ed' by Any Car Repair!" The advertisement is for an auto repair manual, guaranteed to be "Faster…Easier…and Right on the very first try!" Though the manual only cost $6.95 (plus a thirty-five cent delivery charge), the readers are never given that figure. Instead, they are instructed to pay in installments: "remit $2

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[19] Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 61.
[20] Dave West, "Follow that Car!" *Man's Life* 3, no. 3 (March 1955): 8, 10, 58; Charles Stewart, "King of the Car Snatchers," *Man's Life* 3, no. 3 (March 1955): 40-41, 46-47.

in 7 days, then $2 monthly for 2 months, and a final payment of 95¢ (plus 35¢ delivery charge) a month later."[22] Clearly, if a $6.95 expenditure was formidable enough to be paid on the installment plan, that wonderful Buick sense of well-being was completely out of reach.

However, despite such indications that *Man's Life* readers weren't fully experiencing the much-vaunted postwar prosperity, advertisements in the magazine did encourage various forms of impression management. A handful of theorists, primarily in sociology, social psychology, and cultural anthropology, have defined impression management as a self-presentation strategy that is typically employed by members of the middle classes. Impression management is clearly useful for functioning in the competitive, relatively anonymous communication contexts of middle-class suburban life, though members of the working classes often read the strategy as "fake" and manipulative.[23] However, to compete in the new, image-based world of consumer, rather than producer, culture, working men were encouraged by advertisers to become aware of impression management strategies. A number of the advertisements in the sample *Man's Life* suggested this perspective; one promised to "Make Your Hair Last a Lifetime"; another portrayed a trim, smiling, all-American man in a "Figure Slimmer" ("Only $3.49 complete with crotch piece"), a garment that "flattens your front and takes in inches of

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[21] Modern Mart Pepgo Ring Seal advertisement, *Man's Life* 3, no. 3 (March 1955): 59.
[22] Motor's Auto Repair Manual advertisement, *Man's Life* 3, no. 3 (March 1955): 7.
[23] See Smith, pp. 10, 58, 63-71, 77-78, 106-108, 111-115; Foley, *Learning Capitalist Culture,* 176-181; and Douglas E. Foley, "Does the Working Class Have a Culture in the Anthropological Sense?" *Cultural Anthropology* 4, no. 2 (May 1989): 137-162, especially 154-155.

your appearance. Clothes will look well on you now!"[24]

And, like the pulps, the sweats featured ads that held out the promise of self improvement and upward mobility. A full-page ad in the sample *Man's Life* features a bold headline: "How You Can Master GOOD ENGLISH—in 15 Minutes a Day." Language use is a significant class marker, and the text in this advertisement works to foster readers' insecurity about their speech. It warns that "Thousands of persons make mistakes in their everyday English—and don't know it." In case the reader were insufficiently insecure, the text continued with a list of common mistakes: "It is surprising how many persons … say 'between you and I' instead of 'between you and me'; use 'who' for 'whom'; and mispronounce the simplest words." Luckily for the *Man's Life* audience, a professorial-looking photograph of the system's founder—complete with a neatly trimmed Freudian beard, suggesting high cultural capital—smiles reassuringly at the reader and offers assistance.[25]

Once proper English was mastered, one could "Start Speaking Spanish or French" and "Let CORTINA Show You a Short-Cut To…more money [,] a new career [,] cultural enjoyment [and] travel fun." The text's promises became more explicit further down the page: "With a Second Language—You're a Big Step Ahead of the Other Fellow; Job Opportunities Here and Abroad" awaited. Other advertisers in the same issue offered writing aptitude tests and instruction; correspondence courses in 116 subjects, ranging from "Steamfitting" and "Radio Operating" to "Good English;" and an "Easy Low-Cost

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[24] "Make Your Hair Last a Lifetime," The Keratone Co., Inc., *Man's Life* 3, no. 3 (March 1955): 11; "Figure Slimmer," 61.

[25] For the foundational work on language use as a class marker, see Bernstein. Advertisement, "How You Can Master Good English," Sherwin Cody Course in English, *Man's Life* 3, no. 3 (March 1955): 49.

Method" of music instruction for "piano, guitar, accordion, or any *other* musical instrument" (emphasis in original).[26] These self-improvement ads demonstrate the multiple registers in which the sweats engaged their readers. While the magazines overtly appealed to rugged, self-sufficient masculinity, the advertisements targeted the economically marginalized readers' financial and cultural insecurities.[27]

Finally, as one would expect from the manly genre, advertising in the sweats hawked the stereotypically masculine commodities of weapons and bodybuilding. A full-page ad for a Black Forest brand hunting knife urged readers to "Make This remarkable Test! Place a metal disc the size of a half dollar on some pieces of thick cardboard. Plunge the point of the Black Forest knife downward. The knife will completely pierce the metal piece without ANY damage to the blade!" While mainstream men's magazines also carried advertisements for knives, the instructions for the hands-on, metal-stabbing demonstration are more vigorous than would be expected from, say, *Field and Stream*. Another knife advertisement that would not be found in a mainstream men's magazine was a much smaller ad—a text-heavy, 2 ¼ inch by 1 ½ inch square—which offered a throwing knife touted as "Balanced—With Deep Penetration." Knife throwing has traditionally been a "rough," non-middle-class, entertainment.[28] And, of course, the omnipresent, full-page Charles Atlas ad on the inside back cover virtually shouted in its

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[26] "Free Record," Cortina Academy, 9; Newspaper Institute of America, inside cover; International Correspondence Schools, 5; U.S. School of Music, 51.

[27] Smith describes similarly contrasting appeals in *Hardboiled*.

[28] For example, in a self-published memoir of his working-class boyhood, Howard Chislett describes knife-throwing as one of the "dangerous games" he and his cohort played. Howard Chislett, *From This Place and Time* (Bloomington, Indiana: iUniverse, 2006), 11.

huge bold lettering, "I Can Make you A Real He-Man."[29] Clearly, the advertising in postwar men's adventure magazines implied promises of personal image enhancement, upward mobility, and reaffirmed masculinity.

The Stories and Images of the Sweats

But the sweats drew their audiences in with other implied promises: the cover illustrations, which have recently become collectors' items, featured rock-muscled he-men, barely clad women, danger, sadistic violence, and implications of sex. In fact, without the newfound popularity of the magazine covers (which became marketable on the coattails of their extremely desirable ancestors, pulp magazine covers), the genre may have been forgotten. Aside from Peterson's brief and somewhat sanitized mention of men's adventure magazines in his magazine history, a pair of recent volumes that focus on the genre's cover art constitute the full extent of publication on the magazines. Postwar librarians considered the men's adventure magazines distressingly lowbrow, and few institutions subscribed to them.[30]

The sweats were, for the most part, aimed at members of what historians have called "rough" working-class culture, as differentiated from the "respectable" one. While respectable working-class masculinity was predicated on the old craft tradition of honor, responsibility, industry, thrift, and pride in craft, men who had been excluded from or who had chosen to reject the craft model developed a competing version of working-class masculinity. The two groups shared some signifiers of masculinity: both valued

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[29] Black Forest hunting knife advertisement,.55; throwing knife, Knife-Crafters, Inc., 80.
[30] The two recent books are from Parfrey, *It's a Man's World,* and Collins and Hagenauer, *Men's Adventure Magazines in Postwar America*. While few institutions subscribed to the sweats, fewer still have

patriarchal male supremacy, physical vigor, and, in David Montgomery's phrase, a "defiant egalitarianism." In addition to those qualities, "rough" working-class masculinity rejected domesticity, displayed profanity and aggression, consumed alcohol, gambled, was profligate, and engaged in extra-marital sex. It is important to remember, however, that these two forms of working-class masculinity could and did occasionally overlap and coexist, both within individuals and groups.[31]

The articles in the sweats reflected working-class fears and fantasies as well. Given the blood-and-guts content of the adventure tales, it is unsurprising that many articles described ways one could die or be dismembered. While virtually every issue spun yarns about exotic dangers—death by wild animal, Nazis, or lunatics—warnings about more pedestrian perils were also common, under titles such as "Anesthetics Can Kill You" and "10 Reasons Why You Will Die Young."[32] The world, for readers of the sweats, was a threatening place. But, based on the frequency of exposes, the fear of being cheated seems to be one that resonated with men's adventure readers. Issue after issue described "How Crooked Gamblers Prey on You," "How to Pick a Golf Cheat," "50 Ways to Gyp a GI," and how to "Watch Out for Auto Lemons."

The frequency of this theme suggests a readership uncomfortable with evaluating interpersonal motives and communications in a rapidly changing world. It also suggests

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archived them. The only substantial non-private collections are maintained at Michigan State University, the Kinsey Institute at Indiana University, and Bowling Green State University.

[31] Joshua B. Freeman, "Hardhats: Construction Workers, Manliness, and the 1970 Pro-War Demonstrations," *Journal of Social History* 26, no. 4 (Summer, 1993): 725-744; Stephen Meyer, "Work, Play, and Power: Masculine Culture on the Automotive Shop Floor, 1930-1960," *Men and Masculinities* 2, no. 2 (1999): 115-134; David Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 13.

an audience that often feels as if it has been treated unfairly. In an unusually self-reflexive twist, *Men's Digest* even published an expose on its own industry in the 1965 "Men's Adventure Stories Debunked," whose author admitted that "we 'stage' our adventures—exaggerate them—or make them up altogether." He softened the blow by sharing some tricks of the trade and letting readers feel "in the know." But still, the impression remains that, at least in the opinions of the publishers and writers, these readers were easily fooled. Or, as Adam Parfrey put it, "in postwar America, working-class [former] soldiers depended upon the mass-market magazines for their civilian life-lessons. … Men's adventure magazines. All of them had, among the lures of woman flesh and vicious bad guys, a lot of warnings, how-to's, and comforting memories of wartime, when decisions were black and white … ."[33]

And, in fact, the idea that their readers were rubes that did seem to be the overwhelming opinion of the magazines' staffs. Parfrey, talking about staff perceptions, refers to readers as "blue-collar yahoos," and notes that staffers were often embarrassed about where they worked.[34] Writer Dorothy Gallagher, who had served a stint at Marvin Goodman's Magazine Management Company in her youth, remembered that "at Magazine Management, magazines were produced the way Detroit produced cars."[35]

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[32] Glen Willard, "Anesthetics Can Kill You!", *Man's Life* (March 1955): 12; "10 Reasons Why You Will Die Young," *Men Today* (November 1963); story title listed on cover, reprinted in Collins and Hagenauer, 81.

[33] Larry Garrison, "Exposed: How Crooked Gamblers Prey on You," *Man's Illustrated* 16, no. 3 (June 1972); Tom Ramsey, "How to Pick a Golf Cheat," *Ma*n (August 1967); Leo Guild, "50 Ways to Gyp a GI," *Male* August 1951; Gene M. Brown, "Watch Out for Auto Lemons," *Man's Magazine* 3, no. 5 (June 1955); and Kevin James, "Men's Adventure Stories Debunked," *Men's Digest* 1965 p. 11-13; quote on 11; Parfrey, 5.

[34] Parfrey, 7.

[35] Dorothy Gallagher, "Adventures in the Mag Trade," *The New York Times on the Web,* 31 May, 1998.

Salaries were low, management was gruff, and many of the staffers were alcoholics, misfits, and has-beens. Many others, though, were neophyte writers on their way up: Gallagher names Mario Puzo, Bruce Jay Friedman, David Markson, Mickey Spillane and Martin Cruz Smith as former Magazine Management writers. Pen names were common, both because they were embarrassed about the formulaic writing, and to pretend an expertise they didn't have. For example, pieces written by "Dr. Shailer Upton Lawton," a frequent contributor, were in reality the work of Jules Archer. Lawton had indeed been a physician, as well as a writer, but had sold the rights to his name before his death in 1966.[36]

Portrayals of Psychology

The sweats used sex and swaggering masculinity to appeal to rough working-class men. And, like other media in 1950s America, they also featured the language and broad concepts of psychology. But the psychology of the sweats differed from the psychology of middle-class magazines like *Life* or *Time*. The middle-class magazines typically framed the new popularity of psychology as a balm for the stresses of the modern, middle-class world. Their portrayals emphasized that psychology was scientific, that it required the expertise of the professional, that it was uniquely American, and that it was a status symbol. They linked it to elite culture, as exemplified in a 1961 *Time* cover introducing the week's feature article, "The Anatomy of Angst." The cover featured a full-page reproduction of Edvard Munch's "The Scream," with the magazine's title prominently superimposed on the sky in white lettering. Across the upper right-hand

[36] Richard Bleiler, *The Index to* Adventure Magazine, vol. 1 (Mercer Island, WA: Starmont House, Inc.,

corner, covering part of the TIME lettering and part of the sky, a bright yellow banner announced "Guilt & Anxiety."[37] *Time* and magazines of its ilk emphasized the high cultural capital that psychology already enjoyed. These portrayals emphasized Freud and his Continental sophistication, and they associated psychology with elite education, as when *Time* grounded one discussion in existentialist philosophers' influences on psychoanalytic thought.[38] These magazines tended to celebrate psychology as an instrumental means to further the middle-class self-improvement project: the unconscious was a tool to be tapped and harnessed, and the therapist was an expert guide in this process.

While the middle-class magazines talked about psychology as a panacea for the new stresses of modern middle-class life, the sweats' presentations of psychology offered no panacea. In fact, portrayals of psychology in men's adventure magazines from the 1950s and 1960s contained three major, recurring themes: fear of being controlled by external forces; concern over gender roles; and insecurities about sexual performance and sex norms. Control was associated with psychology in both the middle-class and working-class magazines. However, while the middle-class magazines portrayed psychology as a way for patients to re-gain control of their own lives, representations of psychology in the sweats instead focused on the loss of control. Headlines made frightening suggestions: "You Can Be Railroaded into a Psycho Ward"; "Hypnosis Can

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1990), 208.

[37] "The Anatomy of Angst," *Time* (31 March 1961), 44-51.

[38] For an example of an elitist, celebratory portrait of Freud, see "The Explorer," *Time* (23 April 1956), 72-76; the philosophical article is "Psychiatry & Being," *Time* (29 December 1958), 26-27.

Make You a Killer!"; and "Could You Commit a Murder in Your Sleep?" (the answer was "yes"). Control was threatened on several fronts. One common theme in the sweats was that of false accusations: articles such as "You Can Be Accused of a Sex Crime!" and "They Called Me a Sex Fiend!" narrated tales of unscrupulous women who falsely claimed rape. Such recurring motifs, uncommon in middle-class magazines, reflect working-class men's unstable claims to respectable, law-abiding citizenship, even when they were indeed abiding by the law. The articles with psychological twists are similar: "You Can Be Railroaded into a Psycho Ward" and "My Neighbors Put Me in a Mental Hospital" recounted false accusations that resulted in the narrator's loss of liberty.[39]

Working-class fears of the system malfunctioning to deprive them of their liberty were hardly far-fetched. However, the theme of external control in the sweats went further than this. Hypnosis was a common trope. In a 1956 article titled "Can a Snake's Eye Hypnotize You?" readers were warned that snakes "have hypnotic powers" and "hypnotize rodents, birds, and sometimes men." Another headline warned readers to "Beware! Hypnosis Can Make You a Killer.' In addition to hypnosis, hormones could threaten readers' autonomy: the 1956 article "The Mystery of Your Glands" traced Napoleon's degeneration from an "aggressively masculine" womanizer to a defeated, shrunken shell with "pronounced feminine characteristics" because of a glandular malfunction. Then there were other physical threats to one's control: "The Truth about

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[39] Steve Lawton, "You Can Be Railroaded into a Psycho Ward," *New Man* (September 1963); "Beware! Hypnosis Can Make You a Killer!" *Man's Daring* (March 1960); Mayo Kent, "Could You Commit a Murder in Your Sleep?" *Sir!* (1956): 6, 74; "You Can Be Accused of a Sex Crime!" *Man's Action* (November 1956); Hal McCabe, "They Called Me a Sex Fiend," Real Men (May 1956): 28; Charles H. Terry, "My Neighbors Put Me in a Mental Hospital," *Bluebook* (November 1955).

Amnesia" solemnly reported in 1960 that "true loss of memory strikes 40,000 Americans…each year," apparently sending them into seedy, immoral, and dangerous situations that they would have avoided in their normal states. And sleepwalkers were cautioned to lock themselves up securely at night, lest they become another of the many hapless somnambulists who had unknowingly committed murder without waking up.[40] The underlying feeling of all of these pieces is that one can never be certain of one's control over oneself, and that external, nefarious forces might take the reins at any moment. Although the stories in the sweats were clearly fantastical, workers had certainly lost a measure of control in the workplace in the postwar period. While the 1946 labor strikes had demonstrated union solidarity, they had also provoked a backlash from Congress in the form of the Taft-Hartley Act. The Act prohibited key union strategies and collective organizing of supervisors. It also purged communists from leadership positions in unions, effectively neutering union radicalism. To distance themselves from the taint or radicalism, as well as to increase the likelihood of sharing in postwar prosperity and the expanding consumer culture, labor leaders turned to a model of business unionism that downplayed the natural conflict of interest between management and workers. Unions did manage to get wage increases for their members during the postwar prosperity boom, but in exchange they relinquished their earlier demands for a voice in operations and decision-making. Additionally, postwar industrial expansion went hand in hand with authoritarian control of industrial workers, and industrial-organizational psychologists often facilitated those mechanisms of control. This new level of

[40] "Can a Snake's Eye Hypnotize You?", *Sir!* (Fall 1956); "Beware! Hypnosis Can Make You a Killer,"

management control on the shop floor was an affront to traditional codes of working-class masculinity, frustrating the ideals of independence and "defiant egalitarianism."[41]

The second major psychological theme in the sweats involved a pronounced anxiety about gender roles. Working-class masculinity, particularly "rough" working-class masculinity, emphasized a homosocial male supremacy that was threatened by the "new woman" of the 1920s, as well as by women's incursions into the workplace during World War II. While many of those women had been forced out of paid labor and back to domesticity in the postwar era, the foundation of traditional gender roles had clearly been cracked. Tellingly, a good deal of the paid employment still open to women after the war placed middle-class women in positions of authority over working-class men. Teachers, social workers, and, increasingly, female psychologists made decisions that affected working-class men and their families.[42]

These cultural tensions help us understand the gender role anxiety that saturated the sweats. A 1955 *Man's Life* title summarized the theme perfectly: "The American Male Is No Longer a Man, Says a Woman Psychologist." The "woman psychologist," writing in a style that is suspiciously colloquial, nonpsychological, and masculine, claimed that "the American male is turning soft." The article emphasized two points: men had become "pampered" "foul-ups and weaklings" (qualities in direct opposition to

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Man's Daring (March 1960); "Mystery of Your Sex Glands," *Sir!* (Fall 1956); "The Truth about Amnesia," *Sir!* (July 1960); Kent, "Could You Commit…?"

[41] Michael Burawoy, *Manufacturing Consent: Changes in the Labor Process under Monopoly Capitalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979); Zickar; and Cohen, 153.

[42] For the homosocial nature of working-class masculinity and resistance to the inclusion of women, see Stephen Meyer, "Work, Play, and Power: Masculine Culture on the Automotive Shop Floor, 1930-1960," *Men and Masculinities* 2, no. 2 (1999): 115-134.

traditional working-class masculinity, and—not coincidentally—qualities which working-class men had long attributed to both women and higher-class men); and women were plotting to take over man's dominant role (indicating a complete inversion of the basic definition of masculinity). Even the modern feminist reader can sense the deeply disquieting impact that this prophecy must have had on its intended audience.

Another indication of gender role anxiety was the regular discussion of homosexuality in the sweats. It was the second-most frequent topic in the magazines surveyed, just after sexual performance itself. Readers were told "Why Homos Like Elvis" and "Why Homosexuals Feel Superior," and they were asked, rather pointedly, "What Are Your Homosexual Tendencies?" It is important to note that homosexuality appeared to signify a failure in masculinity itself rather than a specifically sexual act; researchers and historians have observed that homosexual activity did not necessarily define a working-class man as a homosexual, nor did it necessarily threaten his masculinity, as long as he took the dominant, or traditionally masculine, role. However, that was predicated upon the non-dominant partner being visibly feminine, a self-presentation that was much more typical of working-class homosexuals than of middle-class homosexuals. As male homosexuality became more visible—and more visibly middle class—in the postwar period, it also became less comprehensible to heterosexual working-class men.[43]

Interestingly, the postwar presentations of lesbianism in the sweats did not have

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[43] George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940* (New York: BasicBooks, 1994); Craig M. Loftin, "Unacceptable Mannerisms: Gender Anxieties, Homosexual Activism, and Swish in the United States, 1945-1965," *Journal of Social History* 40, no. 3 (Spring 2007): 577-596, especially 578-589.

the male-focused, titillating quality found in popular representations today. Lesbians were generally signified as yet another way a man could lose his wife, be humiliated, or become disadvantaged. One exposé, ostensibly penned by Dr. Shailer Upton Lawton, introduced the case of a diamond cutter who had fallen in love with a lesbian and managed to persuade her to marry him. She could never love him, though, and when he finally understood that fact, he fell apart: his vision became blurry, and he developed an uncontrollable trembling in his hands. In short, in addition to being left loveless, he had also destroyed his livelihood. The moral, according to the fictitious Dr. Lawton, was that "[m]any men pass up the danger signals, as Dennis did, and rush into marriage with girls who have latent homosexual desires. This is one good reason why every man ought to know all he can about female homosexuality.[44] "Another article, "Lesbians Are Not Legally Liable," features large photos of mannish women in boxy, unflattering suits, complete with neckties, and complains that despite laws against homosexual behavior, women's activities tend to be overlooked. Once again, men are portrayed as being treated unfairly: their sexual deviance is always punished.[45]

Despite the bodice-ripping images on the covers and the overt and pervasive sexualized article titles, the actual sexual content of the sweats was fairly tame. In fact, the tone of such discussion was decidedly more anxious than erotic. Readers were told in dozens of ways that they were inadequate: typical titles include "Ex-G.I.'s Make Lousy Lovers"; "What You Don't Know about Sex"; "American Males Are Lazy Lovers," and "Your 10 Worst Sexual Blunders." Unsurprisingly, psychological terms and ideas were

[44] Dr. Shailer Upton Lawton, Is There a Lesbian in Your Town?" *Male* (April 1954): 16-17, 70, 72, 74.

often borrowed to legitimize discussions of sex, leading to a flurry of titles featuring nymphomaniacs. And in a magazine version of bait-and-switch, sexually oriented titles were slapped indiscriminately onto decidedly nonsexual articles. For example, one 1969 article titled "The Sex Drives that Cause 1,000 Student Suicides a Year" presumably titillated potential readers with the expectation of a story about college girls having sex, a fairly frequent trope in the sweats. Once the reader bought the magazine, however, he discovered a long and dull article that attributed most student suicides to worry over grades and the stresses of independent college life.

The insecurity about sex reflected in the sweats, like the concerns over control and gender roles, seems to reflect worries about the changing nature of working-class masculinity as an identity rather than worries about sexual activity in itself. Perceptions of sex have been highly classed since the middle class emerged in the early 19th century with values of restraint, including sexual restraint. In addition, sexuality became a component of working-class masculinity during the age of mass production, and by the postwar era, an aggressive and overt sexuality was associated with working-class masculinity.[46] However, the debut of oral contraceptives in 1960 and the resulting sexual revolution changed the cultural meanings of sexuality. In the midst of this upheaval, nonmarital sex would not necessarily have been seen as a symbol of rugged, working-class opposition to middle-class society; middle-class teens (and often their parents) were engaging in the same behavior. If sexuality had been, at least in the popular imagination,

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[45] Thomas Francis, "Lesbians Are Not Legally Liable," *Sir!* (May 1957): 24-25, 56-59.
[46] Chauncey, 35-36; Meyer, 119.

the province of the working class rather than the repressed middle class, it was no longer. So in this arena, too, the codes and meanings of working-class masculinity were in flux in response to broader cultural changes.

Conclusions

Men's adventure magazines of the postwar era offer modern observers a glimpse into the interests and concerns of their working-class readers. The magazines themselves were starkly different than the slick, mass-circulation magazines of the period that were marketed to middle-class and upwardly mobile readers. The sweats were cheaply printed on thin, low-quality paper. Their advertisements were small and cluttered, and they hawked products associated with need and thrift, not the sparkling new mass-produced consumer goods advertised in the mainstream publications. The articles in the sweats betray fears of being cheated, falling behind, and not being adequate. And their presentations of psychology bear no resemblance to the positive, scientific, optimistic portrayals of the discipline published in the mainstream magazines. Psy in the sweats is instead about sex, fear, and loss of control, and indicates the ambivalent use that these readers made of the broader culture's new psychological orientation.

Chapter Five. Successes and the Seeds of Failure: The Community Mental Health Movement

By the early 1960s, interest in class issues, mental health, and how the two intersected was at an all-time high. Social progressives had every reason to imagine that their hopes for a more enlightened, humane, and egalitarian society could be fulfilled. The sitting president of the United States not only put mental health on the national agenda, he also specifically linked it to social, economic, and cultural factors that needed to be improved. Congress responded, funding the Community Mental Health Centers Act of 1963, which proponents believed would revolutionize prevention and treatment of mental illnesses, particularly among previously underserved groups. But the optimism extended even further than that. Mental health experts now possessed more than a decade of research findings about correlations between class, environment, and mental health. They believed that, as expert guides to optimal ways to live, they could improve the quality of life in disadvantaged communities. They thought that the community mental health center system would finally allow the discipline of psychology to express its full potential for facilitating human development and uplifting the whole nation. More surprisingly from the vantage point of half a century later, a significant number of them also recognized the structural and ideological changes that would be required to achieve a truly healthy, democratic society; they believed that the psy professions could, and should, work toward those changes.

In addition, less than a year after the Community Mental Health Centers Act was passed, Lyndon Baines Johnson launched a "war on poverty," publicly acknowledging massive economic inequalities in the country and pledging to alleviate them. This war on poverty became a cornerstone of Johnson's "Great Society," a series of domestic programs designed to eliminate poverty and racism. Continuing in the direction of Kennedy's New Frontier policies, Johnson's Great Society initiatives combined legislation, direct aid, educational programs, and job training with "community action," a strategy that involved organizing and empowering disadvantaged people to participate in developing and administering the programs aimed at their communities. Here, too, optimism ran high; the feeling seemed to be that surely in a nation so powerful, wealthy, and progressive, social problems such as poverty could be dispatched much as we had dispatched polio almost decade earlier.

And, in the background of this national attention to mental health and class inequalities, a small but vocal group of psychiatric practitioners had begun what would be known as the anti-psychiatry movement, arguing that the concept of mental illness itself was a social construction developed to legitimize conformity and elite social control. While all three of these developments in the 1960s would, at first glance, appear to provide new tools with which to decouple the profession's unreflexive associations of mental health and middle-class standards, all three paradoxically ended up reinforcing those associations instead.

Community Mental Health Centers

In 1963, John F. Kennedy became the first sitting president of the United States to put mental health on the national agenda. Part of his interest was likely personal: his younger sister Rose had suffered from mental problems that resulted in a botched lobotomy and permanent institutionalization at the age of 23. However, Kennedy was also impressed with the new psychotropic drugs that had been developed in the 1950s, as well as with sociological research demonstrating the links between economic factors and mental illness. Based partly on the 1961 recommendations of the Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health, and partly on an ambitious reworking of the Joint Commission proposal prepared by the National Institute of Mental Health, Kennedy urged Congress to take a "bold new approach" to the problem and establish community mental health centers that would democratize access to mental health care. Like other proponents, he also believed that the centers would be able to both prevent and cure most mental illnesses. Kennedy's views on mental illness reflected the social and scientific optimism of the times and led him to claim, "I am convinced that, if we apply our medical knowledge and social insights fully, all but a small portion of the mentally ill can eventually achieve a wholesome and constructive social adjustment."[1]

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[1] For Rose Kennedy's problems, see Ronald Kessler, *The Sins of the Father: Joseph P. Kennedy and the Dynasty He Founded* (New York: Warner Books, 1996), chapter 16. For the Joint Commission's final report, see Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health, *Action for Mental Health* (New York: Basic Books, 1961). For a discussion of the commission, see Bernard L. Bloom, *Community Mental Health: A General Introduction,* 2nd ed. (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1984), 18-20. For the NIMH proposal, see David F. Musto, "Whatever Happened to 'Community Mental Health'?" *Public Interest* 39 (Spring 1975): 53-79, especially pp. 62-65. For Kennedy's address to Congress, see John F. Kennedy, "Special Message to the Congress on Mental Illness and Mental Retardation," February 5, 1963. Online at the American Presidency Project, University of California, Santa Barbara: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=9546

The community mental health center (CMHC) approach was certainly new. Rather than warehousing mental patients in huge, troubled state hospitals, CMHCs would focus on prevention and, for those whom preventive measures failed, outpatient treatment. To address the chronic shortage of psychological professionals, the centers would increase the use of trained para- and non-professionals, many of whom could be members of the community served, thus strengthening the centers' ties to the community. Finally, the centers promised to increase access to care for previously underserved low-income populations, and to incorporate the profession's growing awareness of how social and environmental factors impacted mental health. Kennedy himself acknowledged that preventing mental illness would require "the general strengthening of our fundamental community, social welfare, and educational programs which can do much to eliminate or correct the harsh environmental conditions which often are associated with mental retardation and mental illness."[2]

The timing was ideal for Kennedy's proposal. One reason was the force of public opinion: by the time Kennedy spoke, it was widely accepted that the state mental hospital system needed reform. State mental hospitals had been vilified since the 19th century for their overcrowding, lack of therapeutic treatment, and inhumane conditions. After World War II, a series of exposes launched by a *Life* photo essay titled "Bedlam 1946," had heightened public and legislative awareness of those brutal conditions. The images and articles detailed filthy conditions, beatings, starvation, overdrugging, and inhumane use

[2] Kennedy.

of physical restraints. A number of the exposes noted similarities between the American state mental hospitals and Nazi concentration camps. For example, prominent journalist Albert Deutsch investigated dozens of hospitals, and wrote in 1948 that many of them "rivaled the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps—hundreds of naked mental patients herded into huge, barn-like, filth-infested wards, in all degrees of deterioration, untended and untreated, stripped of every vestige of human decency."[3] Fictionalized versions drew still more attention to the topic. Forty million people experienced the horrors of a state mental hospital along with Olivia de Havilland's character in the 1948 film *The Snake Pit*. Based on a former inmate's 1946 memoir, *The Snake Pit* became one of the five top-grossing films of 1949.[4]

By the early 1950s, more than half of the states had initiated reforms in their state hospital systems. According to psychology professor Bernard L. Bloom, two reforms in particular—in addition to the development of new psychotropic drugs—set the stage for the community health movement: geographic decentralization and the related idea of the therapeutic community. Under geographic decentralization, the more progressive of the huge state hospitals moved away from the old system, which had housed patients based on treatment modalities, diagnoses, and infirmities. Typical hospitals, under the old system, would allocate patients to electroshock therapy wards, insulin therapy wards, wards for alcoholics, wards for the elderly, wards for patients with certain physical

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[3] Albert Maisel, "Bedlam 1946," *Life,* 6 May 1946; Albert Deutsch, *The Shame of the States* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1948), p. 448. Deutsch also notes that a number of major newspapers began regular coverage of state hospitals in the early 1940s; 178.

[4] Nick Clooney, *The Movies that Changed Us: Reflections on the Screen* (New York: Atria Books, 2002), chapter 9, and Glen O. Gabbard and Krin Gabbard. *Psychiatry and the Cinema*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC:

illnesses, and so on. Under the new system, patients were housed in wards based on the town or area they had lived in before being institutionalized. At the same time, some hospitals developed the idea that the patient community, not just hospital staff, could have a therapeutic function. In this therapeutic community model, the hierarchical relationship between patients and staff was disrupted to include patient collaboration and input on treatment planning, discharge, and assessments of other patients' behavior. According to Bloom, these developments "worked together to democratize the clinical decision-making process."[5]

At the same time, as Bloom suggested, dramatic advances in psychopharmacology provided perhaps the most widespread reason for optimism among psychological professionals. Before the 1950s, chemical treatment of mental illness consisted of tranquillizers, which were primarily used as a chemical restraint for uncontrollable patients. The early drugs were not therapeutic, and they had the unfortunate side effects of impairing patients' thought processes and inducing unconsciousness. However, in the early 1950s, new classes of psychoactive drugs were developed. The first of the new drugs, chlorpromazine, was marketed heavily in the United States as Thorazine, and was hailed as a miracle drug by the psychiatric profession. Thorazine, along with the other neuroleptics that followed, reduced agitation, discomfort, and aggression in patients without excessively sedating them. These new drugs allowed many patients to function outside of an institution, as long as they

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American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1999), 60-64.

[5] Bloom, 11-13; quote on 13.

continued their drug therapy, and ushered in what proponents called the "neuroleptic revolution." Looking back on that heady time, a psychiatrist explained the excitement:

> It is difficult to communicate to younger colleagues the miracle that 150 to 300 mg of chlorpromazine a day appeared to be to the house officers of 1956. It not only sedated the patients but actually made them less psychotic. Some patients began to hallucinate less, and their delusions softened. Finally we were like other doctors in that we had a treatment that actually worked. It was truly an intoxicating time.[6]

It is notable that this psychiatrist was excited not only about the efficacy of this new treatment, but also about his perception that it made him and his colleagues "like other doctors." Psychiatrists saw the new drugs as both confirmation of the medical model of mental illness and as evidence that the broader medical community had been wrong to marginalize psychiatry.

In addition to optimism about psychotropic drugs and the structural experiments of some progressive mental hospitals, another wave of concern about mental hospitals developed in 1961, helping to nudge public and congressional opinion towards the community health center plan. In that year, sociologist Erving Goffman published his observations as a participant-observer in a mental hospital under the title *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. Goffman described the abasement and loss of self typically experienced by patients in mental hospitals, and argued that a good deal of the behavior that outsiders—and, significantly, hospital personnel—would consider "insane" was instead a reasonably rational adaptation to a

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[6] Robert Cancro, "The Introduction of Neuroleptics: A Psychiatric Revolution," *Psychiatric Services* 51 (March 2000): 333-335; quote on p. 334. For discussion of this "revolution," see David Healy, *The Creation of Psychopharmacology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); for a

repressive institution. Goffman further claimed that mental hospitals fostered alienation among their inmates that was frequently more debilitating than the inmates' original problems. In other words, the state hospitals were more likely to create and intensify mental dysfunction in their inmates than to cure it.[7] The following year, Ken Kesey published *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, a critically acclaimed and best-selling novel centered on a tyrannical nurse's abuse of power in a psychiatric hospital.

Goffman's indictment of institutionalization seemed to echo the claims of the community mental health movement. With the new psychotropic drugs, the improved understanding of how to structure treatment, and the unprecedented political support, proponents of community mental health programs believed they could conquer mental illness. The enthusiasm was widespread: by 1961, psychiatrist Leopold Bellak had hailed community psychiatry as the "third psychiatric revolution," placing it in company with the 18th century "moral treatment" that removed mental patients from their shackles, and with the 19th century work of Sigmund Freud. The sobriquet "third psychiatric revolution" stuck, and to many practitioners, it seemed justified. In the mid-1950s, the number of patients in state mental hospitals had begun to decline, dropping from a high of 600,000 in 1955 to 500,000 by 1963. When the popular president urged Congress to establish community health centers in February of 1963, Congress complied eight months

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critique of the modern overemphasis on psychopharmacology, see T. M. Luhrman, *Of Two Minds: The Growing Disorder in American Psychiatry* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000).

[7] Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1961); see especially 355-356. For discussion of Goffman's reception by both sociologists and lay readers, see Charles Lemert and Ann Branaman, *The Goffman Reader* (Oxford & Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1997), introduction. For an overview of critiques, see Raymond M. Weinstein, "Goffman's Asylums and the Social Situation of Mental Patients," *Orthomolecular Psychiatry* 11, no. 4

later, and Kennedy signed the Community Mental Health Centers Act into law on October 31. As one observer noted, "community psychiatry is like a swirling modern convention blaring with noise and spirit that is being beamed to large numbers of friends and neutrals and the opposition party."[8]

Kennedy's assassination did not derail the development of CMHCs. If anything, many of the slain president's former supporters redoubled their efforts to implement his vision. His legacy acquired a near-mythical status in many quarters, as evidenced by the dedication to a1964 *Handbook of Community Psychiatry*. The first line reads, " To John F. Kennedy, President of the United States, who was the rare political leader to be literate and intellectual, courageous as well as sane."[9] For many, Kennedy's assassination provided even more evidence of the need for a broad-based national mental health movement.

The War on Poverty

While the War on Poverty was not directly linked to the CMHCs, the fates of the two programs were intertwined. The new Johnson administration developed an ambitious and progressive domestic agenda that worked to legitimize the CMHC movement even further. The cornerstone of the Great Society agenda was Johnson's War on Poverty. The Kennedy administration had developed the program, and Johnson introduced it during his first State of the Union address in January 1964, less than seven weeks after Kennedy

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(1982): 267-274.

[8] Leopold Bellak, "Community Psychiatry: The Third Psychiatric Revolution," in *Handbook of Community Psychiatry and Community Mental Health,* ed. Leopold Bellak (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1964), 1-11. For decline in state hospital population, see Bloom, 18.

[9] Bellak, xi.

was killed. Journalist Michael Harrington had shocked a complacent nation with his 1962 book, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States*. As Harrington emphasized, the poor—40 to 50 million Americans, almost a quarter of the population—were "invisible." They lived in crowded slums and remote rural regions, places where middle-class Americans rarely ventured, places in which the poor were truly invisible to their more affluent countrymen, who generally assumed that poverty had been conquered by New Deal policies. Harrington's book sold more than a million copies and facilitated postwar America's belated "discovery" of its poor.[10]

Harrington, who was a democratic socialist, recognized the entrenched nature of poverty in late capitalist society. When the head of the new Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) enthusiastically described the billion-dollar appropriation to end poverty, Harrington replied that such an intractable problem could not be eradicated with "nickels and dimes."[11] However, most Americans—and most policymakers—responded to this recognition of deprivation in the midst of affluence with the boosterish optimism so characteristic of the postwar period. Morris Abram, a member of the National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity, captured that optimism in a later interview: "I must say at that time I was very much of the opinion that the government could wipe out poverty, like it could wipe out venereal disease if it just had enough penicillin."[12] That belief

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[10] Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: MacMillan, 1962); invisibility on p. 7. For sales and reception, see Maurice Isserman, "The Other America: Michael Harrington," in *Poverty in the United States: An Encyclopedia of History, Politics, and Policy*, ed. Gwendolyn Mink and Alice O'Connor (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 529-530.

[11] Gary Dorrien, "Socialist in the Wilderness: Left to the End," *The Christian Century* (11 October 2000). 1002-1009; quote on 1005.

[12] Transcript, Morris Abram Oral History Interview II, 5/3/84, by Michael L. Gillette, p. 15. Internet Copy,

was widespread; in fact, according to historian Alice O'Connor, the assumptions and worldviews of social scientists and policymakers who developed the new postwar specialty of "poverty knowledge" ensured that the new body of knowledge would reaffirm rather than challenge the mainstream culture:

> Poverty, to use the terminology of the day, occurs in some "other," separate America; as an aberration, an exception, a "paradox" of plenty rather than as an integral or necessary condition of the affluent society. Built on this premise, poverty knowledge continues to hold out a certain promise: doing something about, even eliminating, poverty will not require radical change; whether through social engineering, wage subsidies, economic growth, or the new/old-fashioned strategy of pushing people into the market, the paradox can be resolved without resorting to a massive redistribution of power and wealth.[13]

One major component of the war on poverty was the Community Action Program (CAP), a program that also impacted the CMHC movement. One *New York Times* review called the Community Action Program the "heart" of the war on poverty, and other observers agreed.[14] The CAP funded local Community Action Agencies as small, real-world research laboratories whose mandate was to attack the causes of poverty. The program was intentionally designed to be flexible so that participants could try a variety of approaches and tailor them to the local community's needs. Modeled after two successful community projects in New York City, the CAP's theoretical underpinnings drew on cutting-edge progressive social science research, and emphasized participation

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LBJ Library. Online:
<http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/oralhistory.hom/abramm/abramm.asp>.

[13] Alice O'Connor, *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 15.

[14] Adam Walinsky, "Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding," review of *Community Action in the War on Poverty,* by Daniel P. Moynihan, *New York Times* 2 February 1969. Sociologist Noel A. Cazenave claims that the community action program was what made the war on poverty unique in *Impossible Democracy: The Unlikely Success of the War on Poverty Community Action Programs* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 12; Kent B. Germany calls it "a foundation" of the war on poverty in "War on

by members of the community. In fact, the bill's language required "maximum feasible participation of residents of the areas and members of the groups served." The reasons for this participatory process were threefold: to minimize dependency, to channel dissatisfactions that might otherwise erupt in antisocial ways, and, as one 1969 study described it, to shape social behavior of poor participants "so that the poor would become more 'socially responsible' and imitative of the middle class."[15]

While the idea of facilitating the "maximum feasible participation" of low-income stakeholders in a government program may seem benign, the would turn out to have potentially radical implications in the volatile racial and social climate of the time. But when it was drafted, there was little agreement about what the clause meant, or about what it should mean. Sociologist Lillian B. Rubin summarized the situation clearly in 1969, five years after passage of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, when she wrote, "[T]he revolutionary implications of what they were proposing escaped the framers of the act, in part, because of the preconceptions about poverty, race, and welfare that grip American thought and distort our vision."[16] However, the revolutionary implications of community activism were not lost on the members of the communities in question. In

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Poverty," in *Poverty in the United States: An Encyclopedia of History, Politics, and Policy*, ed. Gwendolyn Mink and Alice O'Connor (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 774-782; quote on 780.

[15] For development of the CAP, see Kenneth B. Clark and Jeannette Hopkins, *A Relevant War against Poverty; A Study of Community Action Programs and Observable Social Change* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968); quote on 117; O'Connor, *Poverty Knowledge*, chapters 5 and 6; and Cazenave. The two successful precursors of the CAP were Mobilization for Youth and the Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited-Associated Community Teams, both of which are addressed extensively in both O'Connor and Cazenave.

[16] Lillian B. Rubin, "Maximum Feasible Participation: The Origins, Implications, and Present Status," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 385, no. 1 (1969): 14-29; quote on 14. It is clear, though, that a very few of the early CAP proponents did understand—and approve of—the full potential of the program. See O'Connor, 168.

1966, *Time* magazine described what it clearly felt were extreme examples of community participation:

> In Cleveland, slum dwellers organized, marched on city hall and left dead rats on the steps to dramatize their demand for better housing. In Washington's Lafayette Square across from the White House, 90 Mississippi Negroes pitched tents to publicize their own pitiable housing situation. In Syracuse, an OEO [Office of Economic Opportunity]-financed group sent jeering squads to heckle Republican Mayor William Walsh during his 1964 re-election campaign, used poverty funds to bail out demonstrators. When their funds ran out, they sent a 25-man delegation to besiege [Sargent] Shriver [head of CAP] for more, and when he turned them down, they went to the White House in a vain attempt to see Lyndon Johnson.[17]

While the public reaction to the nonviolent civil disobedience tactics of the early Civil Rights movement had generally been positive, that acceptance apparently did not extend to protests involving dead rats. More importantly, early Civil Rights protestors had disciplined themselves to be not only nonviolent but polite; many of them were middle-class, and they reflected the appearance and mannerisms of the white, middle-class culture they wanted access to. These new protesters did not.

Almost immediately, CAP drew fire from established powerbrokers. The Republicans saw the program as a way to politicize new Democratic forces; the Democrats saw it as a challenge to their existing local power structures. And for the most part, the men who had created it saw it as a disaster. When one Syracuse organization launched sit-ins, rent strikes, and protests at city hall, the mayor accused both the organization and the OEO of "class warfare."[18] By August 1965, LBJ himself railed against CAP in a private office conversation: "I think somebody ought to veto these

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[17] "The War Within the War," *Time* (13 May 1966); p. 7 of 11. Online: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,835478-4,00.html>.

damned fool community action [programs]. Don't you put any money in community action. Just cut it down. Hear that? Just cut that down… ."[19] But perhaps the most vocal critic of CAP was Pat Moynihan, assistant secretary of labor until 1965. A few years later, a Johnson staffer described Moynihan's antipathy to CAP:

> Moynihan was very disturbed from the beginning by community action. I remember … driving him home one night, and he said, "You realize what you've done, don't you? You've ruined the poverty program and the anti-poverty effort with community action. It's wild; these people are out to destroy you. And you're giving money to the very people who are going to destroy you." It was a really vigorous, violent speech about the crazy way we were proceeding to remedy the problems of poverty.[20]

Moynihan, of course, was also famous (or infamous) as the author of *The Moynihan Report* (1965), formally titled *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*. The report issued a warning about the "pathology" of the black community, which Moynihan attributed to the breakdown of the black family and the predominance of matriarchal cultural patterns in black communities. Reception of his work was as sharply polarized as it remains today: functionalists, conservatives, and proponents of individual responsibility applauded what they saw as his insight and candor. Moynihan's work revived and popularized Oscar Lewis's "culture of poverty" idea, which became a major tenet of public policy during the 1980s. From the other end of the political spectrum, structuralists saw Moynihan's argument as racist and coined the phrase "blaming the

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[18] Syracuse mayor William F. Walsh, quoted in O'Connor, 171.

[19] LBJ on Community Action Program Funding, August 18, 1965. Online at Presidential Recordings Program, Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia: <http://tapes.millercenter.virginia.edu/clips/1965_0815_Eisenhower/>.

[20] Transcript, Harry McPherson Oral History Interview IV, March 24, 1969, by T. H. Baker, p. 42, Internet Copy, LBJ Library. Online: <http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/oralhistory.hom/mcpherson/mcpherhp.asp>.

victim" to describe his perspective.[21]

Sargent Shriver had little tolerance for either radicalism or public relations problems. At the same time, the escalation of the war in Vietnam drained budget and national focus from the war on poverty. By the end of 1965, the OEO had significantly reduced or discontinued funding for the most controversial CAP groups. The next year, Congress cut funding to the bone for local CAP programs; in 1967, the Green Amendment effectively finished CAP off, and precluded any possibility of real change, by placing programs under the control of existing local governments. Liberals were the first to wave the white flag in the war on poverty; writing in 1969, one of Robert Kennedy's former staffers admitted that "by January of 1966, the battle was already lost."[22]

There were many reasons for the failure to eradicate poverty. Critics on the far left argued that poverty is an intrinsic part of late capitalism. Without an actual redistribution of power and resources, no problem so deeply imbedded can possibly be changed. Another reason cited by many liberals was the lack of a job creation program. Johnson was unwilling to spend the large amounts of money that would have been necessary to create jobs on the scale needed, and even the amount he had been willing to

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[21] For current perspectives, see the January 2009 special issue of *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (AAPSS), "The Moynihan Report Revisited: Lessons and Reflections after Four Decades." Frank F. Furstenberg argues that Moynihan ignored class differences in black families, leading him to pathologize culture instead of investigating socioeconomic inequalities; Furstenberg, "If Moynihan Had Only Known: Race, Class, and Family Change in the Late Twentieth Century," *AAPSS* 621, no. 1 (2009): 94-110. In the same issue, Ron Haskins insists that Moynihan's analysis has been confirmed over the past forty years; Haskins, "Moynihan Was Right: Now What?", *AAPSS* 621, no. 1 (2009): 281-314.

[22] Walinsky.

allocate dwindled as the war in Vietnam took more and more of the country's resources. Vietnam itself is an of-cited reason for the failure of the war on poverty; as U.S. military involvement escalated, so did domestic conflict about our participation. Other issues fell by the wayside. A number of observers argue that racism was a component of the public's eventual rejection of the war on poverty; a large segment of the white population saw anti-poverty initiatives as benefiting only African Americans, at just the same time that the Black Power movement was alienating many of those white people. Additionally, the Watts Riots in August 1965 made both Congress and middle-class voters leery of any further empowerment of disadvantaged communities.

However, despite the preponderance of belief that the war on poverty failed, it does have some defenders. Noel A. Cazenave, a historical sociologist, has argued recently that although the Johnson administration did not eradicate poverty, CAP achieved the "unlikely success" of politicizing and empowering the poor. This also had the continuing (if not continuous) effects of increasing citizen participation in community issues and of making urban social service organizations more aware of and responsive to the needs of the people they serve. Similarly, historian Robin D. G. Kelley believes that CAP projects fostered interracial ties among liberal activists, provided venues in which already-politicized African Americans could act, and, as Cazenave mentioned, gave poor blacks more input with the social service agencies designed to help them.[23]

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[23] Cazenave, 1, 6; Robin D. G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 95-97.

CMHCs: Trouble in Utopia

However, just as Community Mental Health Centers were being launched, using a participatory, grassroots model intentionally patterned after CAP, the CAP programs were alienating both their government sponsors and the public. Even before the Act was passed, the community mental health project was troubled. The American Medical Association was horrified by what it saw as excessive government interference in medicine. Its members lobbied vigorously against the act, and almost every congressman was warned against passage by his own physician. In psychologist George Albee's words, "the implication was that the centers as proposed by Kennedy and his friends in the Congress were another step down the road to socialized medicine, and perhaps ultimately, of course, to Godless Communism and worse."[24]

The AMA particularly opposed funding for staffing the centers, fearing that federal staffing money would undermine physician autonomy. Under pressure from AMA leaders—and against the recommendations of AMA's mental health experts—Congress cut the money for staffing. The upshot was that a great deal of federal money became available to build facilities. Further, that money was most likely to be awarded to entities that were already developed enough to be able to navigate the labyrinthine application forms and demonstrate that they could meet the requirements for federal funding. At best, this favored existing large institutions—hardly the "bold change" Kennedy had hoped for. At worst, it lent itself to outright money grabs by organizations

[24] Franklin D. Chu and Sharland Trotter, *The Madness Establishment: Ralph Nader's Study Group Report on the National Institute of Mental Health* (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1974), 18; George Albee,

whose leaders were happy to build or improve their structures, but who had no interest in serving the wider community.[25]

However, there was a deeper conflict. The community mental health movement was predicated on the idea that social environment and mental health were intrinsically linked. While this idea had been central to social psychology at its inception as a distinct discipline in the early 20th century, mainstream psychological professionals insisted on an ahistoric, self-contained, intrapsychic "self" as the object of their investigations. And, in fact, even social psychology in the United States had moved away from a truly "social" view of human behavior by the 1920s, as evidenced by social psychologist Floyd Allport's famous claim that "[t]here is no psychology of groups which is not essentially and entirely a psychology of individuals."[26] Many psy professionals saw the community mental health movement as an illegitimate digression from the true object of the discipline, the intrapsychic self.

Worse still, much like early sociologists, many mainstream psychological professionals were disturbed by the social activism of some CMHC proponents. Not only was social activism, in their view, a digression from the true task, but it also seemed to carry the taint of unprofessionalism. Finally, the CMHC proponents' concern for the

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"Community Mental Health Centers: Critical Evaluation: Through the Looking Glass," *International Journal of Psychology* 9 (1970): 293-298, quote on p. 294.

[25] Chu and Trotter, 20, 25-26. Two years after the original bill's passage, Congress did allocate funds for staffing, but did so on a declining basis—each grant provided up to 75% of staffing costs for the first 15 months only, and then decreasing amounts for three more years. The assumption had been that local and state governments and nonprofit entities could make up the difference; this typically did not pan out. See Chu and Trotter, 20-21. For specific examples of blatant abuses of CMHC funding, see Castel, Castel, and Lovell, 135-136.

[26] Floyd Allport, *Social Psychology* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1924); quote on 4.

poor, emphasis on collective action, and progressive perspective provided ample fodder for the era's remaining Cold Warriors. Despite its spreading popularity, psychology was still suspect among certain groups as a potential form of social control; that fear, coupled with the CMHCs' explicitly progressive agenda, sparked charges of anti-Americanism. In the debut issue of *Community Mental Health Journal,* a psychologist described the thought process behind that perspective:

> The anti-mental health position typically, although not uniformly, begins with the assumption that there exists an international communist conspiracy … [which] has as its aim the destruction of freedom and liberty. The mental health professional acts so as to deprive citizens of their freedom. Hence, the mental health professional is either a Communist or a tool of the Communists.[27]

When this was published in 1966, during the escalation of both U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War and the antiwar movement, this perspective must have seemed ludicrous to readers of a community mental health journal. Similarly, those readers' zeal for empowering the poor, leveling hierarchies, battling racial oppression, and working collectively must have been incomprehensible to the anti-communist contingent. The CMHC project was clearly situated on the era's major cultural fault lines.

Insurgencies

The largest CMHC quakes precipitated by those fault lines occurred in New York City, and were a direct result of class schisms. Echoing the fallout from the "maximum feasible participation" clause in the CAP legislation, psy professionals and policymakers

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[27] Edward S. Sulzer, "Demagogues and Mental Health: A look at Both Sides," *Community Mental Health Journal* 1 (March 1965):14-18; quote on 14. For controversy over social activism in the psy professions, see Richard Kunnes, "Will the Real Community Psychiatry Please Stand Up," *International Journal of Psychiatry* 9 (1970): 302-312; see 309.

were soon sharply divided over community participation in community mental health centers. While NIMH emphasized the importance of community participation and a sense of "ownership" of the centers, the wording of the CMHC Act was even more vague on the topic than the CAP language had been. However, despite the fuzziness, the idea of citizen input threatened some psy professionals. Psychiatrist H. G. Whittington was more candid about his concerns than many of his colleagues:

> The community mental health establishment, in theory at least, is conceived of as being democratically based. Recent guidelines for the administration of federal construction grants, emphasize that services must be tailored to local needs and desires and that citizens must have a voice in policymaking and decisions. In an age when the majority of governmental processes are carried on by the consent, rather than the participation, of the governed, is such a heavy reliance upon the citizen governing board--the usual mechanism for ensuring citizen participation--entirely realistic? In an age of bureaucracy, is the "servant of the people" model of sufficient prestige to be attractive to mental health professionals?[28]

Whittington, apparently assuming a sympathetic readership, didn't even bother to camouflage his elitism. While most practitioners who expressed discomfort with the citizen input component of CMHCs cited the need for trained professionals to make decisions in patients' best interest, Whittington cut to the chase. Not only was citizen participation "unrealistic" (and his use made it unclear whether he meant that expecting citizens to care enough to participate was not realistic, or whether he meant that any citizens hoping to have a real voice was being unrealistic), but—more to the point—it would diminish the professional prestige necessary to attract psy professionals.

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[28] H. G. Whittington, "The Third Psychiatric Revolution — Really? A Consideration of Principles and Practices in Community Psychiatry," *Community Mental Health Journal* 1, no. 1 (March 1965): 73-80; quote on 77.

While Whittington's perspective was not universal, it was by no means unique. A great many critics cited such professional elitism as one reason for the CMHCs' failure to achieve real community participation. In addition to blatant provider arrogance, a pervasive middle-class orientation at most of the CMHCs was likely to have chilled community interest. Ralph Nader's organization, The Center for the Study of Responsive Law, investigated the CMHC program and produced a fairly critical report. One major observation, though, was that "the centers program as a whole embodies a fundamentally middle-class model," reducing (or eliminating) its effectiveness with target communities.[29] The individuals in charge of the centers were overwhelmingly white, middle-class, and male. Even in the best centers, a marked paternalism was evident. The professionals, especially in the early years, wore office attire, expected to be addressed with honorifics, and spoke in a relatively formal style. One 1972 study of CMHCs in impoverished areas noted that the structures created to facilitate citizen involvement were patterned on middle-class volunteer boards, a structure that must have seemed formal and foreign to the low-income members of the communities.[30]

Given the distance between the glowing promises of CMHC egalitarian rhetoric and its less-luminous reality, it is not surprising that discontent festered. And, given the cultural precedent of protest and civil disobedience that had developed during the Civil Rights movement and continued with the anti-war movement, it is not surprising that some members of the communities took matters into their own hands. As historian David

[29] Chu and Trotter, 91.
[30] Ibid., 84.

F. Musto pointed out, "The centers began operating just as many local communities, particularly those mired in poverty and given priority as CMHC targets, were seething with overt anger against the Establishment."[31] In 1968 and 1969, that anger boiled over twice in New York City, as residents and then staff members demanded that the grassroots promise of CMHCs be fulfilled.

The first incident took place in September of 1968. Lawrence Kolb,[32] chair of Columbia University Department of Psychiatry, had gathered a small group of community leaders from the impoverished neighborhood of Washington Heights and the adjoining middle-class Inwood. The university wanted the community's support for a new CMHC. However, rather than soliciting community feedback in the planning stage, as program guidelines instructed, Kolb and Columbia wanted their hand-picked guests to rubber-stamp the plans they had already developed. Moreover, those plans included demolishing the Audubon Ballroom, the site of Malcom X's 1965 assassination. And, according to the alternative journal Health/PAC (Policy Advisory Center) Bulletin, blueprints for the proposed CMHC included two public entrances—one for the mostly black and Puerto Rican residents of Washington Heights, and another for the white, middle-class inhabitants of Inwood. While the separate entrances were, in all likelihood, planners' attempt to conform to the CMHC "catchment area" rules that required separate centers for each geographic area to be served, the result was breathtakingly insensitive.[33]

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[31] Musto, 70.

[32] Kolb's father was also a noted psychiatrist, and was also named Lawrence Kolb. The chair of Columbia's Department of Psychiatry was the younger Kolb.

[33] Maxine Kenny, "Battle for Heads, Beds & Territory," *Health/PAC Bulletin* (May 1969), 10-11.

Black and Puerto Rican residents of Washington Heights—residents who had not been invited to Kolb's meeting—crashed the gathering, took control of the meeting, declared the existing plans illegitimate due to their lack of community input, and insisted that the community be allowed to plan its own CMHC. Amazingly, from the vantage point of four conservative decades later, the city's Community Mental Health Board and the New York State Department of Mental Health named the gatecrashers the new mental health planning group for the area. No significant funding came with the title, and since CMHCs were required to provide inpatient as well as outpatient care, it was clear that the new health planning group would have to "come back to the medical empire for psychiatric beds and services."[34] In other words, the community members felt as if they had been give a voice, and the city and state agencies could claim to have significant community involvement, but the basic structure of services would remain the same.

Another, more widely publicized, battle began over the use of paraprofessionals in the CMHCs. One of the ways in which CMHCs were supposed to provide "maximum feasible participation" for community residents was by hiring what was first termed "indigenous nonprofessionals" (later, the preferred term became "paraprofessionals") drawn from the communities to work in the centers. Ideally, they were supposed to function as conduits between each community and its CMHC, helping the professional staff to understand the community and its needs, and helping the community residents understand and access the CMHC's services. In addition, the paraprofessionals would

[34] Kenny, 10.

benefit from job training and upward mobility. The philosophy behind the use of paraprofessionals had been part of the initial call for CMHCs in the 1961 final report by the Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health, which, to a great degree, dismissed the psy professionals' claims to singular expertise. The report noted that, "In the absence of more specific and definitive scientific evidence of the causes of mental illnesses, psychiatry and the allied mental health professions should adopt and practice a broad, liberal philosophy of what constitutes and who can do treatment … ." The report also argued that "nonmedical mental health workers with aptitude, sound training, practical experience, and demonstrable competence should be permitted to do general, short-term psychotherapy."[35]

The use of paraprofessionals was hailed as one of the great successes of the CMHC plan. It seemed like a win-win proposition. The employment of community members would help alleviate the growing mental health manpower shortage; it would enhance communication and understanding between professionals and the community; it would facilitate community empowerment; and, according to early projections, it would "give work to millions of the unemployed," preparing them for better lives. Additionally, a number of independent studies had demonstrated that paraprofessionals and other individuals could be just as therapeutically effective as professional psychological practitioners.[36]

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[35] Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health, ix.

[36] For staffing shortages, see Lawrence C. Kolb, "Community Mental Health Centers: Some Issues in Their Transition from Concept to Reality," *Hospital & Community Psychiatry* 19, no. 11 (November 1968): 335-340, especially 336-338; and Robert Reiff and Frank Riessman, *The Indigenous Nonprofessional: A Strategy of Change in Community Action and Community Mental Health Programs* (Lexington:

The rosy vision did not pan out. Instead of hiring "millions," CMHCs employed only 10,800 indigenous nonprofessionals by 1974. Additionally, few of those hires had come from the ranks of the unemployed: in one sample of 380 nonprofessional workers, half had college degrees, and only a quarter had ever received welfare. According to the researchers, "Quite often those hired were the least representative of the community, the closest to conforming to middle-class standards."[37] And, despite the recommendations of the Joint Committee report, the paraprofessionals did not end up doing "general, short-term psychotherapy." Instead, they tended to be assigned tasks that were menial, unpleasant, or both. Arthur Pearl, co-author of a 1965 book that partially inspired NIMH's New Careers Training Branch for paraprofessional training, was appalled by the inadequate implementation of his ideas. Rather than establishing the foundation for upward mobility and a better quality of life, Pearl found that the new programs were largely "conning poor people into doing some lousy jobs."[38]

The insurgency occurred in New York City's Lincoln Hospital, whose Mental Health Services division had not only obtained CMHC status, but had been designated one of eight "model centers" in the country by NIMH. In addition to traditional psychiatric services at Lincoln Hospital Mental Health Services, Lincoln had opened three "neighborhood service centers" in the South Bronx, and staffed them with 140

Community Mental Health Journal, 1965), 4. Quote—and estimate of "millions"—in Frank Riessman, *New Careers: A Basic Strategy Against Poverty,* A. Philip Randolph Educational Fund, pamphlet no. 2, p. 1; quoted in Castel, Castel, and Lovell, 153. For an overview of the efficacy of paraprofessionals, see Bloom, 38-39.

[37] Castel, Castel, and Lovell, 153-154; quote on 154.

black and Puerto Rican "indigenous workers." The service centers and their staffs were informal and accessible, and they helped disadvantaged people deal with the outside world, assisting with employment, housing, and the bureaucracy of other social service agencies, and working to organize and educate members of the community to be more effective advocates for themselves. The work in the neighborhood centers emphasized looking at clients' problems as a whole, not just as psychological phenomena. Additionally, the centers were highly attuned to problems of racial and socioeconomic disadvantage. Paraprofessional staff in the neighborhood centers enjoyed a reasonable amount of autonomy in their work, as well as the satisfactions of actually helping community members. In the words of two former administrators, neighborhood center staff "could feel fully skilled" in their work.[39]

However, prior to the conflict, staff learned that funding for the storefront centers was being cut. Nonprofessional staff would be retained, but in more traditional positions at the Lincoln Hospital Mental Health Services outpatient clinic itself. Those positions involved much less autonomy; workers' primary task was to fill out screening forms for new patients (not "clients," the preferred terminology in the neighborhood centers). All therapeutic interactions were handled by professional staff. Additionally, nonprofessionals at the Lincoln Hospital Mental Health Services shared small offices,

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[38] Arthur Pearl, quoted in Chu and Trotter, 63. The inspiration for the New Careers program was Arthur Pearl and Frank Riessman, *New Careers for the Poor: The Nonprofessional in Human Service* (New York: Free Press, 1965).

[39] Robert Shaw and Carol J. Eagle, "Programmed Failure: The Lincoln Hospital Story," *Community Mental Health Journal* 7, no. 4 (1971): 255-263; quote on 259; Seymour R. Kaplan and Melvin Roman, *The Organization and Delivery of Mental Health Services in the Ghetto: The Lincoln Hospital Experience* (New York: Praeger, 1973); Chu and Trotter, chapter 11; Castel, Castel, and Lovell, 156-159.

with eight workers and two telephones in each. With this upcoming change looming, the actual crisis was precipitated by the dismissal of four nonprofessional workers, and management's refusal to reevaluate the decision. Equally important, however, was the staff's awareness of broken promises and unfulfilled expectations. A career ladder than had been promised to nonprofessionals failed to materialize; the program's stated commitment to community control proved hollow; and the program innovations that had attracted many of the professional staff were being abandoned, along with the theoretical orientations that had fostered them.[40]

On March 4, 1969, a group of 150 employees—mostly nonprofessionals, but with a scattering of professional supporters, including three psychiatrists—occupied Lincoln Hospital Mental Health Services. They ousted department heads and replaced them with nonprofessionals. They evicted any staffers who supported the administration and issued an 18-page list of charges and demands. The charges included racism, administrative inefficiency, and a disintegrating quality of services provided to the community. The demands included the replacement of the much-criticized director, reinstatement of the dismissed workers, establishment of an advisory committee of community members with actual power to make decisions, a professional training program for the paraprofessionals, and the implementation of seniority- and competence-based promotion guidelines. The occupation continued for fifteen days, and ended in a mixed victory: nineteen insurgents were arrested, but charges were later dropped; the director was

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[40] Shaw and Eagle, 259; Chu and Trotter, 176-180.

replaced, and his replacement was vetted by the staff and community; and the community board was formed. However, with the closing of the neighborhood centers, Lincoln was left with a traditional model of psychiatric care.[41]

The optimism that had been so prevalent in the psychological profession just a few years earlier had dissipated. In 1965, an abridged English translation of Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilization* had been published, arguing that the concept of madness had been used as a mechanism of social control. Two years later, the South African psychiatrist David Cooper coined the name for the "anti-psychiatry" movement. The movement, most closely associated with Cooper, Thomas Szaz, and R. D. Laing, consisted of a small but publicity-savvy group of theorists who challenged the existence, diagnosis, and treatment of mental illness, claiming that psychiatric treatment was often more destructive than helpful. While Foucault never considered himself part of the movement, others interpreted his work that way.

By the early 1970s, the CMCH movement and the War on Poverty had both suffered irreversible blows. CMCHs, though they still exist today, exist now to provide traditional psychological services, the same services whose inadequacy for large swaths of the population inspired the CMHC solution. The War on Poverty had been hobbled by insufficient funding, unwillingness to closely examine the nature of poverty and capitalism, and a racial backlash sparked by the Watts Riots and a widespread belief among white people that the program had benefited only blacks. With the escalation of

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[41] Castel, Castel, and Lovell, 158-159; Kenny, 11; Chu and Trotter, 180-181.

the Vietnam War, interest in poverty fizzled. In 1973, President Richard Nixon dismantled the Office of Economic Opportunity. Even Morris Abram, the member of the National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity who had been so optimistic about the potential for ending poverty, succumbed to the prevailing mood. Sadly, he expressed the views of many members of the administration and the public when he said that the "maximum feasible participation of the poor … turned out to be a rip-off. The only thing it did was to teach a good many blacks to become more effective leaders, which is not a bad thing. But it was a rip-off, and it really, perhaps, furnished the patronage route out and up for a group for rather talented, but not necessarily honorable, and somewhat venal, black leaders."[42] His discouragement—and his racism—fit in well with the new mood of the times.[43]

With the failure of the CMCHs, the forfeiture of the War on Poverty, and the professional retrenchment in the wake of the anti-psychiatry movement, the psychological professions lost their thread of interest in class issues. A few persistent socially minded practitioners continued to advocate social change as a preventive measure for mental health into the early 1980s, but they seemed out of step with the times, and very few discussions of class appear in the professional journals after the 1970s. Additionally, there was no consensus on what had gone wrong with the promise of the CMHCs. According to psychiatrist Morton O. Wagenfeld, there were two views: either the CMCH movement failed because it took a wrong turn into social activism, or it

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[42] Transcript, Abram, 15-16.

[43] While most commentators have judged the War on Poverty a failure, and while it did fail in its stated goal of eradicating poverty, some observers believe that its long-term effects have been successful. See, for

failed because it didn't succeed at social activism. There was precious little common ground between the views.[44]

Conclusions

In the optimistic, socially progressive 1960s, the Community Mental Health Center Act appeared poised to at least partially alleviate the profession's class-based inequalities, inequalities that had concerned a small number of psychological professionals for decades. In tandem with the War on Poverty, idealists in the profession believed that the CMHCs could revolutionize mental health and personal fulfillment among the poorer classes. In retrospect, their idealism was both naïve and understandable. The forces that curtailed the egalitarian experiments of the War on Poverty as well as the CMHC movement were foreseeable, since eliminating poverty and allowing traditionally subordinated groups to take power would necessarily entail some kind of redistribution of money and power from other groups. So while the reformers were unlikely to have been able to anticipate the specific ways in which resistance occurred—the racial backlash, the class-based conflicts over propriety and form—it does seem as if they could have anticipated structural resistance of some kind. However, part of their utopianism likely stemmed from their psychologically driven tendency to

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example, Robert Clark, *The War on Poverty: History, Selected Programs, and Ongoing Impact* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 2002).

[44] Morton O. Wagenfeld, "Primary Prevention and Public Mental Health Policy," *Journal of Public Health Policy* 4, no. 2 (June 1983): 168-180.

individualize. Even in the midst of implanting a structural solution to inequality, they remained unaware of the structural barriers.

Conclusion

> *Whereas middle-class culture allows people to 'self-actualize' their abilities, to develop intellectually and artistically, to 'become' in a very individual sense, working-class culture allows other things. What is viewed from a middle-class point of view as a kind of mindless herd mentality is experienced in a working-class community as intimacy, belonging, and loyalty. From a working-class perspective, we can see the middle class's severely restricted body language. Can you imagine a news anchor who speaks with great feeling and facial expression and uses his hands? Working-class people perceive most middle-class people as talking heads. They don't fully trust people who show no expression or emotion.*
>
> –Barbara Jensen[1]

> *[P]sychology is a site where power and knowledge are transformed into each other in particularly dense ways in modern worlds*.
>
> –Peter Hegarty[2]

This project is, at its root, about the subjectivities of class and perceptions of those subjectivities. As Barbara Jensen suggests, the ways in which individuals make sense of their worlds are heavily inflected by classed positioning and classed cultures. And, as Jensen's examples demonstrate, those classed ways of making sense are intrinsically bound with values, self-presentation, communication styles, and emotion—core focal points of psychology. I argue that the subjective class experience of postwar psychological practitioners distorted their perception of other class experiences, fostering their unreflexive adoption of middle-class values, perspectives, communication styles, and ways of being as normative. Contemporary sociologists and psychologists have identified a number of common (though certainly not universal) class-based differences

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[1] Barbara Jensen, "The Silent Psychology: A Presentation at the 1995 Youngstown Working-Class Studies Conference," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 26, nos. 1-2 (Spring-Summer 1998): 202-215; 207.
[2] Peter Hegarty, "Getting Dirty: Psychology's History of Power," *History of Psychology* 10, no. 2 (May 2007): 75-91; 77.

in what I have referred to as "worldview." Broadly, members of the middle classes tend to value a future orientation and deferred gratification, while members of the working classes value a "here-and-now sensibility."[3] Members of the middle classes emphasize individuality and competition, while members of the working classes emphasize community and belonging.[4] Members of the middle classes tend to use more abstract language and more modifiers, suggesting mastery and reflecting universality, whereas members of the working classes use a more concrete vocabulary and rely more on body language and vocal tone to convey meaning, suggesting interrelationship and reflecting the specific communication situation.[5] Additionally, members of the middle classes value "impression management," while members of the working classes prioritize authenticity.[6] While the contrasts are, admittedly, broad, imprecise, and not universal, they provide a starting point for understanding how classed position can impact the realm that we understand as psychology.

Since the earliest days of modern psychology, practitioners and theorists have assumed middle-class ways of being human as their standard. By the 1950s, when both the discipline and popularization of psychology grew exponentially, this class normativity was entrenched and largely invisible to most of it practitioners. I have outlined a number of reasons that this normativity was invisible: most psy practitioners unthinkingly accepted the broader culture's middle-class standards; their desire to frame

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[3] See, for example, Wanda M. L. Lee, 16, and Barbara Jensen, 174. Quote in Jensen, 174.
[4] Stephens, Markus, and Townsend.
[5] See Bernstein; Jensen, "The Silent Psychology"; and James D. Meltzer, "A Semiotic Approach to Suitability for Psychotherapy," *Psychiatry* 41 (1978): 360-375.

psychology as a "science" precluded cultural analysis of its tenets; and, for the most part, practitioners were middle class and privileged, and it is extraordinarily difficult to see one's own privilege.

The invisibility of middle-class privilege among psy practitioners, along with the sense of entitlement fostered by that privilege, has become a recurring theme in the emerging field of multicultural counseling. In a recent qualitative study of psy professionals and academics who were not from middle-class families, an unnamed psychological academician summarized his discomfort with this normative privilege, saying "One of my difficulties in the academy is that I very often find myself not having much in common with some of my colleagues who either came through upper-middle-class or privileged experiences and consider themselves entitled to the privileges they are enjoying."[7] Working-class clients have also articulated unease with that sense of privilege. One anonymous client, talking about her experience with a female therapist, said, ""I think being from different classes separates us, and it's more than just the money. They just present themselves with such self-assurance, that I can't identify. I wonder how different their lives must have been, that they can seem so sure of themselves. My life has never been that secure."[8] The first-person accounts illustrate some of the classed differences in cultural expectations of interiority and self-

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[6] Foley, *Learning Capitalist Culture,* 176-181, and ""Does the Working Class…" 154-155; and Jensen, "The Silent Psychology," 209.

[7] Mary Lee Nelson, Matt Englar-Carlson, Sandra C. Tierney, and Julie M. Hau, "Class Jumping Into Academia: Multiple Identities for Counseling Academics," *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 53, no. 1 (2006): 1–14; 6.

presentation, differences that contributed to misinterpretations between psy professionals and people from the working classes.

While this project was unable to investigate postwar, working-class perceptions of psychological professionals, I did have the opportunity to analyze various representations of psychology and psychological professionals in both class-specific and mass media. Mass-mediated, fictionalized portrayals of psy professionals were generally unflattering during the postwar period, as were both fictionalized and ostensibly nonfiction representations in the working-class men's magazines.[9] However, nonfiction portrayals in mainstream, middle-class-oriented magazines were generally celebratory. The unflattering portrayals of psychology and psychologists, both in mainstream and working-class media, appear to reflect a broad discomfort with the increasing role of psychology in public and private life. The discomfort is understandable: psychology is invasive. It presumes to "see" inside individuals' minds, and to uncover things that they may wish to keep covered. The discipline deals with aspects of human nature that many people are uncomfortable acknowledging. Given that view of psychology, and given its meteoric rise in the postwar public sphere, it is not surprising that so many representations were negative. What is surprising is the almost-uniformly positive portrayals of psychology in the mainstream magazines. Perhaps those portrayals reflect

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[8] Bonnie Chalifoux, "Speaking Up: White, Working-Class Women in Therapy," in *Classism and Feminist Therapy: Counting Costs,* ed. Marcia Hill and Esther D. Rothblum (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1996), 29.

[9] One psy cartoon in the early 1970s featured two psychologists claiming their profession would finally "arrive" once a prime-time television show featured a psychologist. They were awaiting psychology's *Marcus Welby, M.D.* What they got instead, a year or so later, was *The Bob Newhart Show* (CBS, 1972-

the early adoption of the psychological worldview by what we now call the "creative class," which would have included the writers and editors of the mainstream magazines. Perhaps the middle-class nature of the psychological project was, at some level, clear to those writers and editors, who actively promoted a middle-class, consumerist lifestyle in the postwar period.[10]

The working-class men's magazine portrayals of psy, however, reflected fears. Their portrayals emphasized the loss of control over oneself, the loss of the traditional, dominant male gender role, and the loss of sexuality as a signifier of working-class masculinity. While the mainstream magazines, and some of the fictionalized portrayals, emphasized the potential for personal growth and individual development that psychology promised, that perspective was conspicuously missing in the sweats. Instead, in the midst of psychology's increasing credibility and status in the public sphere, the sweats presented psychology as manipulative and seamy. Whether this neutralized the threat of psychology's invasiveness, or appropriated a cultural status symbol for earthier, personal gratifications, or simply mocked yet another set of men in suits, there is no way to tell. In the realm of working-class men's magazines, however, the psychological professionals were represented in ways that they would not have approved of.

While both psy professionals and working-class people have misinterpreted each other, the impact of the misinterpretations is not equal. Class positioning reflects power differentials, and privileged groups possess more power to publicly define subordinated

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1978). Newhart's sad-sack, antihero persona was likely not the kind of representation the fictional psychologists were hoping for.

groups than vice-versa. And, as Hegarty reminds us, psychology is positioned at an intersection of knowledge and power in the modern world. As the discipline and ideas of psychology have gained more power in the public sphere, psy professionals' (mis)perceptions of working-class ways of being have found their way into public systems of education, social services, and criminal justice. While the scope of this project precludes examination of specifics, what is clear is that psychology's continued valorization of middle-class ways of being has worked to legitimate the marginalization of non-middle-class individuals, communication styles, and self-presentations.
I have argued that this is one previously neglected reason for Americans' vague and inaccurate belief in "middle-classlessness." From the normative middle-class perspective, even though not everyone is middle class, those who are currently in the "lower" classes should all aspire to upward mobility and eventual middle-class status.

This perspective of middle-class normativity was dominant in the culture at large and among psy professionals during the postwar period. While challenges to this normativity arose from a handful of practitioners, their concerns never achieved widespread currency in the discipline. Researchers did produce a large body of literature detailing class-based differences in psychology, but the very emphasis on that difference continued to frame members of the working classes as psychological "others" who were both objects of curiosity and in need of remediation. Even with widely read and generally sympathetic works, such as Hollingshead and Redlich's pathbreaking study, most readers

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[10] See Cohen, chapter 3.

seem to have focused on the descriptions of differences between the working and middle classes, particularly the rates of mental illness, types of diagnoses, and different prognoses. Very few seemed to note the authors' suggestion that new types of therapies be developed for non-middle-class patients. And, in fact, despite Hollingshead and Redlich's attempts to interrogate middle-class standards of normalcy, their work also reinscribed those norms. For example, in a discussion of school socialization in late childhood, the authors take care to indicate their critical stance towards middle-class values judgments. They continually frame value descriptions in quotation marks to remind the reader of their skepticism:

> This is the time when the neighborhood and the school determine wither "good" manners, that is, manners of classes I, II, and III, will replace "crudeness" and violence or whether official restraints imposed by teachers and juvenile authorities check uninhibited instinctual gratification. "Nice" children of the upper and middle classes become differentiated from the "bad" children of the lower classes.[11]

In this passage, the authors insist on value relativity. However, on the same page, when they turn to psychological analysis, they fail to interrogate their own clinically based value descriptions, writing "A defective superego—an already severe disturbance in identity formulation—is clinically more prominent in lower class children than in the higher classes." Where the modern reader would imagine that the idea of the "defective" superego is, like the idea of "good" and "bad" manners and children, culturally relative, Hollingshead and Redlich made no such parallels in 1958. Their belief in psychology as a science seems to have curtailed their ability to analyze its cultural construction. Here, as

[11] Hollingshead and Redlich, 363.

with most of the postwar work on class and psychology, even the views of critical practitioners were shaped by cultural and professional norms.

Challenges to those norms in the 1960s and 1970s opened discursive space in which some practitioners could imagine utopian potential for the newly developed CMHCs. For the small number of psy professionals and theorists who had decried the middle-class normativity of the profession, proponents' visions of CMHCs as non-hierarchical, community-based, and culturally sensitive held enormous promise. Ultimately, though, the practitioners' idealism was unsustainable. Backlash occurred on multiple fronts: from established elites such as AMA members, worried about the erosion of their autonomy, status, and income-generating capacity; from mainstream psychological practitioners, disturbed at what they perceived as anti-psychological activism; from white members of the public, interpreting anti-poverty programs in racialized ways; and, not least, from the pervasive middle-class assumptions and structures that undergirded most of the CMHCs, and distanced their prospective clients.

While the increasing volume of psychological discourses of class during the 1960s and 1970s illustrates the blind spots in liberal—and radical—practitioners' perceptions of class positions, class relationships, and class-based power dynamics in the broader social structure, the abrupt decline of those discourses in the 1980s is also illustrative. The cultural conservatism of the Reagan era and its emphasis on individualism was one reason for the decline, as was the failure of the War on Poverty and the backlash that blamed the poor for their plight. Additionally, disciplinary embarrassment over the anti-psychiatry movement and disillusionment with the CMHC ideal led most psy

professionals to turn their attention away from class issues. In this context, concern over class-based inequalities began to seem psychologically suspect, as public discourse redoubled its insistence on the individual as the root of and solution to social problems.

In one ceremonial nod to this individualistic perspective, Ronald Reagan awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Eric Hoffer in 1983. Hoffer, a former longshoreman, field worker, and self-taught philosopher, first championed psychological individualism in 1951 with the publication of *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements*.[12] Hoffer insisted that any kind of collective social action was simply evidence of individual maladjustment and inability to function successfully in individualistic society. Hoffer was hardly the first person to espouse that view—industrial management and management-oriented industrial-organizational psychologists had said the same thing for decades—but Hoffer was responsible for a wider popularization of the idea, both in the postwar period and in the 1980s.[13]

It was not until the 1990s that psychological professionals once again addressed class issues with any regularity, and it took another decade before the discipline began seriously interrogating its own views of and complicity in class and classism. To date, the crowning achievement of the resurgence is an official American Psychological Association (APA) task force report on socioeconomic status. In 2000, that body adopted a resolution on poverty and socioeconomic status, noting the increasing economic

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[12] Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer; Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements* (New York: Harper, 1951).
[13] For celebratory looks at Hoffer's appeal, see Calvin Tomkins, *Eric Hoffer: An American Odyssey* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968), and James T. Baker, *Eric Hoffer* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982). For discussion earlier views of collective action as maladjusted, see Michael Zickar, "Using

inequality of the country and the various psychological ills that result. The actual resolutions listed were fairly tepid—calls for more research and professional training, and support for public policies that would benefit education, health care, children, and the poor. The APA convened a task force on the topic in 2006, and its final report, issued the following year, generally repeats the task force resolution. However, in a nod to the recent developments in critical psychology and multicultural counseling, the report encourages practitioners to recognize the various forms of classism, and the ways in which classism can impact both therapy and psychological well-being.[14]

While this appears to be a positive shift in the psychological profession's awareness of and approaches to class, the uneven trajectory of class understanding in the discipline's history suggests a cautious interpretation. Class is still an extraordinarily slippery concept, and understanding of different class subjectivities is difficult, requiring a thorough understanding of one's own privilege and class-based assumptions. Despite the efforts of multicultural counseling proponents, that kind of self-knowledge still appears rare. Additionally, the psychological project itself favors the view of the "self" as deep, complex, and interior, a structure that literary scholar Sarah Winter claims "functions as a new kind of 'psychological capital' for the educated classes … in order to generate the *imaginary psychological unity of an educated class,* represented as the basic

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Personality Inventories to Identify Thugs and Agitators: Applied Psychology's Contribution to the War against Labor," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 59 (2001): 149-164; and Gomberg, especially 361.

[14] American Psychological Association, Task Force on Socioeconomic Status, Report of the APA Task Force on Socioeconomic Status (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2007). Online: <http://www.apa.org/pi/ses/publications.html>.

psychological homogeneity of humanity."[15] Winter's point echoes Pfister, arguing that the development of psychology created, rather than "discovered," a particular kind of psychological interiority that then came to be associated with the privileged classes. If those observations are accurate, and I find them persuasive, it is unclear how any development in psychology, no matter how well intentioned, could completely divest itself of classed assumptions and perceptions.

Mid-century Americans existed in classed positions, even when they were unaware of that fact; that very lack of conscious awareness of class could make one's classed position seem "normal." This was just as true of the mostly middle-class psychological professionals as of anyone else, and it was true at a time when psychological professionals were literally mapping definitive descriptions of what it meant to be "normal." Inevitably, psychological professionals' views of normalcy were inflected with their middle-class socialization, valorizing middle-class ways of being as "healthy" and other ways of being as deficient. The psychological professions' unreflexive alignment with middle-class values, assumptions, communication styles, and psychological processes has naturalized middle-class normativity by associating middle-class patterns and preferences with ideals of mental health and personal fulfillment. Those associations remain, and are still largely unchallenged.

And while psychology and its ideas have clearly shaped the understandings of class in American culture, it also seems clear that psychology's orientation toward class

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[15] Sarah Winter, *Freud and the Institution of Psychoanalytic Knowledge* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 53; italics in original.

has helped to shape the development of the psy professions. For example, if mid-century professionals had taken a more critical view of class divisions and assumptions during the Cold War, one wonders whether psychology would have become as culturally influential as it did, or whether that influence would have developed as rapidly. It seems likely that the military, government, and business leaders who embraced psychology in the postwar period did so partially because psychological professionals generally shared the leaders' views of where power belonged and what "normal" meant. While a small number of psy professionals expressed concern over their discipline's approaches to and influence on class, most psychological ideas and practitioners supported the hegemony of the dominant culture.

Psychology and psychological ideas continue to be central to modern American life in both the personal realm and in the institutions of the society. Further, the psychologization of culture that shaped postwar understandings of class continues to impact those understandings. Examining the intersection of class and psychology in the middle of the twentieth century, then, provides a starting point from which to develop a clearer awareness of how psychological ideas and American perceptions of class evolved in relationship with each other, as well as who those ideas privileged and who they marginalized. Ultimately, this juxtaposition of class and psychology helps us to complicate commonly held notions of American egalitarianism, psychological universality, and scientific progress.

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